KASHMIR PAST AND PRESENT

Unravelling the Mystique

MOHAN LAL KOUL

For centuries Kashmir has been a fascinating subject for authors and analysts. Volumes have been written about its multi-faceted aspects. But since the division of the Indian subcontinent and emergence of independent states of India and Pakistan, the predominent theme of such books has been political.

But since the closing months of 1989, the Islamic fundamentalism struck the Valley of Kashmir—*Firdaus* (paradise on earth), with fanatic ferocity. The cult of the gun overwhelmed the ideals of human brotherhood preached for centuries by the Valley's *Rishis, Soofis,* saints and savants. And this paradise has became a hell.

True to their cult, the fanatic terrorists— misnamed militants—struck against the temples of learning—schools, colleges, cultural cum media institutions, as well as development projects and state buildings etc. Special target of the fundamentalists' lunatic fury was the peace-loving and talented minority community, popularly known as the Kashmiri Pandits. About three lakh members of this community had to run for their lives, leaving behind everything. At present they are living and suffering the indignities as refugees in their own motherland.

This extremely aweful and shocking experience has given birth to a different kind of authors and analysts. Their books, some of them already published, is the result of their firsthand experience, as well as their revised opinions and rethinking on many vital subjects that deeply concern and influence our contemporary life. This book by Prof. Mohan Lal Koul, *Kashmir : Past and Present—Unravelling the Mystique,* is one such book.

One may or may not agree with the assessment and conclusion that the author has arrived at, but these words of a renowned scholar-administrator, Shri T.N. Chaturvedi (M.P.) from his well-argued **Foreword** will certainly compell the reader to ponder over the issues that very much concern us. He writes : "It is a scholary and documented work.... In any case, an honest book dealing with Kashmir is bound to be controversial. But that speaks of its relevance and worthwhileness. Shri Kaul has indeed succeeded in unveiling the past and unravelling the present of Kashmir for any discerning reader, and in giving a glimpse of the unfolding tragedy in the future, unless the nation takes lessons from the past and acts in the present."

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MOHAN LAL KOUL

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Dedicated to

My alma mater

D.A.V. High School, Rainawari, Srinagar, Kashmir
which was Pillaged and Torched by
the Muslim Fundamentalists
of Kashmir

Contents

Preface

My close associations with well-meaning, honest and starry-eyed radicals proud of having played an outstanding role in the struggle against a decadent system baptised me as a Marxist, aiming high with an unflinching faith in a sane and secular society free from religious bigotry and narrow perspectives. As such I frowned at and kept away from any thought wave or movement, which betrayed parochial and communal prejudices, predilections and motivations. Though Muslim communalism, frenzied as it is, was spreading its roots deep and fast, I somehow chose not to deflect away from my old ideological frames actuating me to dismiss it as a sheer aberration. As an act of rationalisation, I looked back at yester years, a period when matters were ripening for a new epoch and Kashmiris of all shades sinking their differences "had conferred with open minds and assiduously worked together in harmony for achieving common good, had assembled together and marched for a common purpose and more than most had pooled their thoughts born in tranquil sanity for integrated wisdom"

I equally drew sustenance from the fact that we, both Muslims and Hindus, are a people living in the same region blessed with bewitching beauty and scenic splendour, speak the same language enriched by the outpourings of our saint-poets, work and live in the same style and share the same mental patterns which by and large reflect the same cultural ethos. Though there were differences, yet the whole appeared as a mosaic of varied strands.

But, all what I had thought and consciously rationalised proved nothing but a castle built on shifting sands. The Muslim majority had been busy hatching a clandestine conspiracy against the Kashmiri Pandits (an euphemism for Kashmiri Hindus) and were one with the Muslim rabids to hound them out from their millennia-old homes and hearths. As part of a pre-meditated design, they were decreed to quit their home-land dubbing them as *Mukhbirs*, agents of India, enemies of Islam and *Kafirs* with no place in an imaginary Islamic state placed on the plank of fundamentalism. The milling crowds trotting about the

length and breadth of the Valley of Kashmir chanted anti-Hindus and anti-India slogans working out the dictates of swashbucklers and screwballs flaunting sophisticated weapons, trained and indoctrinated in Pakistan-established camps across the borders. The killers ploughed into the houses of Hindus, killed them, raped their women-folk, sawed them into two equal halves and chopped off their breasts—all a brutal dance of death and destruction. The Muslim majority exulted over the holocaust of Hindus and genuflected in absolute homage before the killers masquerading as champions of Islam.

The Kashmirian Hindus as a result of militarised Islam and its hurricane fury are refugees in thir own country suffering cynical and malign neglect of powers that be. Dumped in torn tents and shanties, they are in an extremely parlous state, let down and frustrated. foodgates have been opened for all kinds of canards, lies and accusations against them. Human rights outfits operating within the country have dodged and winked at their human right violations and invested the Muslim terrorist groupings with innocence and pietic legitimacy. The brutalities that have been heaped on my hounded-out community motivated me to run through the history of Kashmir with a view to establishing its history of unmitigated social, political, religious and cultural repression bordering on genocide since the advent of Islam in Kashmir.

And now a word or two of indebtedness. I am highly indebted to my friends and colleagues inside academe, who have not only encouraged me, but also posted me with historical materials germane to the subject of my study.

I am extremely indebted to P. N. Kachru, a renowned painter of Kashmir, now in exile, who has been a source of inspiration and guidance to me throughout my life. His precious collection of volumes on Kashmir – looted, and/or destroyed by the illiterate Kashmir terrorists – which I would browse on, proved highly useful while preparing the manuscript. The materials then collected had to be up-dated and collated and in this arduous task I was assisted by the librarian of the Ranbir Singh Library, Jammu, thus deserving my thanks.

I am equally thankful to P. N. Jalali, a veteran freedom fighter of Kashmir, who guided me in regard to issues of political import and the role of Kashmiri Pandits in rejuvenating and re-orienting the backward polity of Kashmir.

I am thankful to B. L. Handoo, my life-long friend; P. N. Raina, a journalist; O. N. Trisal, a freedom fighter and M. L. Raina, a professor, who have assisted me in putting the history of Pandits in proper perspective.

My thanks are also due for P. L. Koul, whose book *Crisis in Kashmir* has proved of great usefulness in tracing fundamentalist developments in Kashmir.

I am also grateful to Sehyog Prakashan, the main publisher of *Kashmir: Past and Present – Unravelling the Mystique*. This is a unique publishing concern in the sense that it probably is the first effort in the capital, to run a publishing house on cooperative lines.

Last, but not the least, I must express my heartfelt thanks to Ashok Gupta of Manav Publications, the co-publisher of my book, which could see the light of this day because of his substantial financial help.

Mohal Lal Koul

Foreword

by T. N. Chaturvedi

(Former Home Secretary and Comptroller & Auditor General, Government of India)

Kashmir has been celebrated in legend, mythology, history and poetry for ages. The very word Kashmir, till not long ago would evoke the mental image of a land of peace, beauty, harmony and learning. This is what makes its trials and travails today much more agonising. There is a pleothora of books by travellers, historians, sociologists, anthropologists and other experts belonging to various disciplines on different aspects of the life of the people.

Since the aggression of Pakistan in 1947 after the merger of Kashmir with India, this part of our country has been in the eye of storm. A large number of scholars have explored the genesis and character of what has been often called the Pakistan problem. But there is no problem, no dispute, except the changing contours of the policies of Pakistan. The situation has got muddied because of the continuing brazen Pakistani propaganda.

One is not unaware as to how sometimes the views of the many so-called scholars of international relations have undergone transformation assuming hostile complexion to the Indian standpoint, due to Pakistani manoeuvrings. It becomes necessary that from time to time the various facets of the Kashmir situation should be analysed afresh and facts brought out to enable the world opinion to comprehend and appreciate the Indian side of the case. It is useful even for our countrymen so that they do not get beguiled either by the subtlety of Pakistani propaganda or the mealy-mouthed johrases of many dogooders, foreign or of indigenous variety, masquerading under the banner of human rights, peace and goodwill among neighbours, etc. It is, therefore, imperative that the coming generations in India remain are familiar with the tortuous and tragic tale of Kashmir, particularly the sad happenings of the last decade.

In the recent past, the former Governor of Jammu & Kashmir published his valuable study on the cobwebs of Pakistani effrontery, the political chicanery of the powers that be in Kashmir and the ostrich-like attitude of the Indian Government from the very beginning till today. General Nanda's book, with his intimate knowledge of Kashmir situation is another notable contribution among a few others.

The present book by Prof. Mohan Lal Kaul, an academician hailing from Kashmir, belongs to the same genre. It has the intensive feel and poignancy of personal pull and academic objectivity. The learned author has tried to unravel the mystique of Kashmir, its past and its present, as the title of the book indicates.

In the first eight chapters, Shri Kaul analyses the origin and ethos of the Kashmiri Hindus and thereafter, briefly but vividly, outlines the main features and principal landmarks in its history till the end of Dogra rule, which provide the necessary perspective for what is happening at present. He touches upon the political, economic, literary, cultural and religious developments of this period.

The subsequent chapters clinically dissect the tangled post-1947 developments in their totality, which provide the meat of the book. The policies and programmes of the different Chief Ministers, beginning with Sheikh Abdullah and ending with Farooq, have been examined with facts and figures many myths have been shattered.

The chapters dealing with the rise of Muslim fundamentalism and its nature and the plight of minorities make a dismal reading and bring out sharply the blissful ignorance, follies and brazen inadequacies of the Government of India.

Article 370 has been the instrument for fostering separatism and providing legitimacy to rampant corruption leading to insurgency and the exile of over three lakh Hindu Pandits from their hearths and homes, making them refugees in their own homeland. The kidglove policy of dealing with antinational insurgents, all along assisted by Pakistan by providing money and arms and now with foreign mercenaries, has only helped to complicate the situation on the ground. The role of the ISI and the support of the O.I.C. stand exposed. It is a pity that the basic issue of the maintenance of national sovereignty and morale as well as sacrifices of our security and military forces is attempted to be diluted by some intellectuals in the name of human rights, plebiscite, self-determination and such emotive phrases generating miasma

of misperception, misinformation and disinformation about political realities. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, through his utterances both in the Parliament and outside, had warned the countrymen of the looming dangers. Even his ultimate sacrifice, four decades ago, in Sheikh Abdullah's jail did not move the purblind Government. It is a matter of satisfaction that the Indian Parliament, through a unanimous resolution transcending all political differences, has asserted its rightful claim to the territory in Jammu & Kashmir, illegally occupied by Pakistan. The people have spoken and it is for the Government to chalk out its future policy and strategy.

Shri Kaul deserves all commendation for writing the book which helps to illumine many dark corners. One may not necessarily agree with the entirety of his diagnosis, observations or even conclusions. As a small example, I do not think Shri B. K. Nehru, as Governor, was pro-Sheikh. I know personally that as Governor he made even Sheikh Abdullah realise and recognise the claims of protocol. The delicacy of functioning with rectitude and propriety, while trying to balance and reconcile the conflicting requirements has to be kept in view. But the overall analysis of the learned author stimulates thinking.

It is a scholarly and documented work without being ponderous. It is authentic in its composition and unsparing in its presentation of even unpalatable facts. In any case, an honest book dealing with Kashmir is bound to be controversial. But that speaks of its relevance and worthwhileness. Shri Kaul has indeed succeeded in unveiling the past and unravelling the present of Kashmir for any discerning reader and in giving a glimpse of the unfolding tragedy in the future, unless the nation takes lessons from the past and acts in the present.

T. N. Chaturvedi
Currently Member of Parliament,
Rajya Sabha

Mandakini Enclave,
New Delhi.
22.8.1994

About Ourselves

A few years ago, in March 1992 to be precise, we launched a publishing venture, which we thought, must be somewhat different from the common rut. Thus came into being a publishing house, which had to be run on the cooperative lines. The following few lines from our first hand-out are self-explanatory:

"... some friends met informally and decided to launch a publishing house, which could be owned by a cooperative society. These friends included journalists, printing technologists, press workers, teachers and others . . . Thus, after completing required formalities, was born SEHYOG PRAKASHAN – probably the first cooperative publishing house in the Capital."

The first general body meeting elected Onkar Kachru and Hari Sharan as its President and Secretary respectively, and Sukh Lal and G.P. Nair were elected as Vice-President and Treasurer.

Sehyog Prakashan, declares that the views expressed by any author is that of his and not necessarily that of the publishing house. But at the same time, we adhere to the basic concept of the famous 18th Century French writer-philosopher Voltaire that

"I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

Onkar Kachru
for Sehyog Prakashan

CHAPTER ONE

Kashmiri Hindus : Origin and Ethos

The Kashmirian Hindus popularly known as Kashmiri Pandits are a distinct class of their own and are considered to be purest specimen of the ancient Aryan settlers in the Valley.[1] Kashmir Brahmans as per George Campbell are quite High-Aryan in the type of their features– very fair and handsome, with high chiselled features and no trace of intermixture of the blood of any other race.[2] In the words of George Grierson, 'The Kashmiris form a branch of the race which brought the language of Indo-Aryan type of India is a fact established by the evidence of their language and physical appearance.[3] In his reference to Kashmiri Pandits Thompson writes that 'the Aryans were a long-headed race of tall stature with narrow noses and fair complexion. Their present representatives are found today in Kashmir'.[4] P. N. K. Bamzai records, 'It is definite that the Aryans of Kashmir are a part of the ancient Aryan settlements on the banks of the river Saraswati. They migrated to the Kashmir Valley when the river changed its course and finally dried up'.[5]

Despite persecution and torture, the Kashmirian Hindus have considerably succeeded in preserving and cultivating their profusely rich and variegated cultural heritage bequeathed to them by their saints and thinkers, literary men and women and other high-brow intellectuals. The broad mosaic of culture woven during the Hindu period of Kashmir history has the potential and inherent strength of standing comparison with any of the ancient world cultures. The value pattern generated as a result of cultural growth and resurgence shaped the lives of the Kashmirian Hindus endowing them with the qualities of head and heart. Invested with breadth of mind and depth of understanding, they lived their lives as vibrant and forward-looking individuals in a society that was open, dynamic and away from contributing to archaic models of thought. The Kashmirian Hindus

as heir to a culture and civilization brimming with tremendous vitality and endurance have never exhibited aversion and apathy to new trends of thought and influences without minding the source and direction they came and emanated from. There are ample evidences available establishing the omnosis of the Kahsmirian culture and civilisation with those of the Greek, Roman and other pre-Islamic Persian cultures and civilizations. Tolerance has been the hall-mark of the Kashmirian culture and civilisation built and fostered during the Hindu period. Unique in its formations, the Hindu cultural ethos has never been exclusive by way of rejecting ideas, beliefs and thought-ways harboured by other religions and value-systems. The Hindus have been assimilative *par excellence.*

The Kashmirian Hindu pattern of values and world-view has not been in any way distinct and separate from the one evolved in the Indian subcontinent. Tolerance, good-will, sympathy and compassion as broad values of humanism have been handed down to the Hindus from their hallowed texts of religion. Motivated by the breadth of cultural ethos, the Kashmirian Hindus having come into contact with the aboriginal Naga worshippers were not ruthless in extirpating and decimating the contents and contours of their faith. Instead they assimilated their faith and modes of worship without resorting to religious persecution.

Buddhism as the most tolerant religion of world religions[6] came into the region of Kashmir only to stimulate a new cultural and religious resurgence. The Kashmirian Hindus particularly the Brahmans joined the ranks of the Buddhist Church investing it with new direction and enrichment. Not fewer than 700 Brahman- monks from Kashmir crossing the inaccessible mountain barriers carried the message of Buddha's religion to Tibet, China and Central Asia. They were not on horse-backs with deadly swords in their hands only to reduce populations, kill, massacre, loot and plunder them for converting them to their faith. Armed with Buddha's gospel of love, peace, non-violence and compassion, the Brahman-monks stirred and generated a new cultural and religious reformation in the regions they entered and encouraged the populace to think and ponder over the existential problems of man and his ultimate destiny. The Brahman-monks also enriched the philosophical content of Buddhism by giving a new treatment to the issues Buddha had hinted at in his sermons.

Buddhism in its hey-day was never intolerant of other religions

and credos. It did not stamp them out, but allowed them to exist, thrive and interact. Forcible conversion was unknown to the Kashmirian ethos. Shaivism with its deep roots in the ancient history of Kashmir battled against the Buddhist ideology largely propped on logic and rational approach to the issues of metaphysics. The battle was on the plane of ideas. The Shaivite scholars wove their web of ideas to refute the Buddhist formulations only to establish their world-view based on a structured thought-process. The 'Saivites borrowed many Buddhist concepts only to invest them with a new ring of meaning within their conceptual ambience. The 'Saivite and Buddhist approach to the moot issues of philosophical thinking never generated religious frenzy leading to the annihilation of the harbourers of each faith.

The Vaishnavite thought equally co-existed with the Buddhist and 'Saivite thought-ways. The appellation of Kashmir as '*Sharda-desh*' (land of Sharda) establishes the Vaishnavite faith having come to Kashmir to leave its impress not only on the thinking elite, but on the general mass of people at grass-root level. *Nilamat Puran* as a Vaishnavite work declares Kashmir as the seat of Cakrin (Vishnu). Kashmir had its own share of *Panchratra* followers, who propagated and shaped the specifics of the creed only to mould the thought-structure of other religions. The interpenetration of Buddhism, Saivism and Vaishnavism has been the product of the most tolerant cultural ethos obtaining in Kashmir. There existed mutual commerce of ideas and beliefs among the three religions, each borrowing the concepts from the other and investing them with new nuances as necessitated by its conceptual frame. The triad of Brahma as creator, Vishnu as preserver and Shiva as destroyer were not conceptually jealous of one another. They were transcendental, but also immanent involved in the weal and welfare of mankind at large. The syncretic images of the Triad explored from various sites in Kashmir sufficiently pinpoint and highlight the tolerant ethos of the Kashmirian Hindus, who at no point of time in their history engaged themselves in sectarian battles generating and unleashing the forces of hatred, ill-will and religious bigotry.

References beyond number can be culled and gleaned from *Rajtarangini*, magnum opus of Kashmir history, which firmly establish that the Hindu kings, queens and other high degree men in corridors of power harbouring a particular faith built temples and *Caityas* of other faiths. There was absolute religious harmony at socio-political

compass. No brute force was employed to convert men of other faiths. In reality, conversion as a term was alien to the Kashmirian milieu and culture. Abhinavgupta, a scion of Kashmir Shaivism, never had even a flicker of thought for converting Ksemendra, a myriad minded genius, who was a Buddhist by faith and credo. Reverence for faiths and beliefs of others was the *sine qua non* of the Kashmirian Hindu ethos. Persecution and torture on religious grounds were absolutely unheard of in Kashmir and elsewhere in the Indian sub-continent.

The multi-farious and multi-dimensional contributions made by the Kashmirian Hindus to various segments of human knowledge have been admirably recognised the world over. There is hardly a domain of creative and critical activity they did not touch and turn it into gold. Philosophy, poetics, dance, drama, painting, architecture, sculpture and music and more than most astronomy, astrology and mathematics are the domains the Kashmirian Hindus have nourished and abundantly enriched by their high-level creative faculty and prolific-intelligence. That Kashmir was a 'High School' of Sanskrit learning and scholarship is testified by the fact that Chemong, Fayong, Hieun-Tsang and Ou-Kong from China traversed all the way to Kashmir to study Sanskrit texts on Buddhism only to refurbish and enrich their stock of knowledge. Kashmir was littered over with temples, *Caityas* and *Viharas* is amply substantiated by all the available historical tomes. The Hindu places of worship and prayer were not centres for preaching and propagating intolerance, religious bigotry and hatred, but were actually repositories of literary, religious and philosophical manuscripts. They were the nerve-centres of learning and erudition motivated by the sole design of cultivating an ethos, which was humanistic, pietic and more than most tolerant.

Be it said, in fine, that the Hindu religious doctrines and concepts have carried the message of peace, brotherhood and co-existence of all faiths and credos. The Hindus of Kashmir through their high-profile thinking turned their land of scenic beauty into an intellectual centre attracting everybody in quest of higher values and spiritual ascension. From Mahayana Buddhism to Trika Philosophy of 'Saivism, they irrigated varied fields of human activity leaving their deep imprint on them. Kalhana, Jonraj, Srivara, Prajya-Bhat and 'Suka, the eminent masters of history, compiled and up-dated the world famous historical document of *Rajtarangini* delineating the historical upheavals and sweeping changes the Hindus had to undergo. Apart from philosophy

and history, the Hindus made masterly contributions to the domain of sculpture revealing profundity of conception and execution. The sculptural images explored from the sites of Ushkur, Harwan, Avantipora and Divasar are definite pointers to the apogee sculpture in its varied spectrum achieved during the Hindu period of Kashmir history. The monumental edifices of Martand, Pattan, Avantipora and Parihaspora and other places in the region of Kashmir bear features testifying to the existence of a distinct school of architecture in Kashmir with close resemblance to the Greek and Roman style of architecture. That the Kashmirians were renowned for being deft and dexterous builders gets sufficiently established by the term of *'Shastra-Shilpina'* tagged onto them. The Karkotas and the Utpalas established kingdoms politically and economically strong and viable commanding respect and tribute from neighbouring kingdoms.

Advent of Muslims

The entire socio-political and religious structure of Kashmir suffered a subversion in the beginning of 13th century when some Muslims and pagans harassed to the limits of physical annihilation by their enemies and archi dissenters found a niche for shelter in politically instable but spiritually stable Kashmir. Muslims and other non-Hindus, though very small in numbers, had started creeping into the armies of the Hindu rulers. It was only in the times of Suhadeva (1305-24) that the entry of Muslims and many other outside elements gained momentum only to swell and beef up the ranks of those already in the military services of the Kashmirian rulers. Motivated by high-degree ethical values, the Hindu rulers afforded the refugees and other aliens shelter and succour and permission to practise their religion without any check or restraint. Rinchin, a fugitive from Ladakh, was provided shelter. Had he chosen to stay on in his native land, he would have been brutally butchered by his own kinsmen. Another such refugee, who was defeated in a battle by his arch enemies, was Lanker Chak from Dardistan. He had to run for life only to find shelter under the wings of Hindu hospitality. Shah Mir, essentially a refugee from Swat, was also a beneficiary of Hindu munificence and benevolence. Bulbul Shah, a Muslim proselytiser from Turkestan under fire in his native land, was also provided shelter in Kashmir, and was permitted to practise his religion with freedom and liberty.

The broad-mindedness and generous hospitality of the Hindu rulers found its echo in many Muslim countries including Central Asia. Thousands of Muslims including Sayyids entered the purlieux of Kashmir only to save themselves from persecution and torture of their Muslim rulers. Travellers, savants and scholars from abroad paid visits to Kashmir to satiate their deep thirst for knowledge as Kashmir had gained tremendous reputation as a pivotal centre of learning. The outside Muslims had no such mission, yet they stayed on enjoying the profuse hospitality and generosity of the Hindu rulers and general mass of people.

The generosity, broad-mindedness and religious tolerance as the bed-rock virtues of Hindu polity proved ominous for the people of Kashmir. The outside refugees, who had sought and were provided shelter in the country, became ambitious of grabbing the throne of Kashmir with the sheer design of transforming the entire religious profile of Kashmir. These outsiders included proselytisers masquerading as sufis obliged to flee their lands under severe threats of torture and persecution were totally responsible for creating conditions in the region of Kashmir leading to torture, severe pains and woeful miseries to be inflicted on the Kashmirian Hindus in the name of God and Islamic religion.

A Turkish Tartar Zul Qadar Khan[7] (1320 A.D.) along with 60,000 soldiers of Turks and Mongols invaded the peaceful and prosperous land of Kashmir reducing it by loot, plunder and arson. Resorting to all cruel acts of savagery, he put even the standing crops to flames. The fertile and prosperous land of Kashmir presented a spectacle of ruin and desolation with every trace of life and blade of verdant grass destroyed and decimated. The cruel invader indulged in an orgy of loot, murder and ruination for full eight months and finally with the onset of winter he was forced to return. But, by way of nemesis, he was caught in a blizzard and thus got perished along with 50,000 Kashmirian Hindus, men, women and children enslaved by him only to be sold off as slaves in the slave-market of Turkestan.[8]

Jonraj, a contemporary historian, has delineated a graphic picture of Kashmir marauded by Zul Qadar Khan's army. Records he, "Kashmir presented pitiful spectacle. Father sundered from his son wailed and moaned. Brother got separated from his brother, never to meet again.... depopulated, uncultivated grainless and gramineous, the country of Kashmir offered, as it were, the scenario of primal chaos".[9]

Zul Qadar Khan massacred thousands and perpetrated unimaginable atrocities on the Kashmirian Hindus. He was cruel and inhuman. Having looted everything from the land of Kashmir, the Hindus died from poverty and starvation. There was so much of blood- letting that the rivers, brooks and brooklets went gory with human blood. Piles of corpses with ravenous crows prying on them could be seen lying about and even wild grass providing sustenance to the blighted people was burnt and reduced to ashes.

In the wake of havoc wrought by Zul Qadar Khan and his host of Turks and Mongols, it was Ram Chander, the commander-in-chief of Kashmir army, whose star was up in the political firmament of Kashmir as he had achieved tremendous success in repulsing the incursion of the Gaddies of Kishtawar. Rinchin too with his eyes set on the throne of Kashmir was awaiting an opportune moment to grab the throne. But, ground realities were not favourable to him. Daring not challenge Ram Chander to an open fight, Rinchin resorted to a sordid stratagem to get him murdered through his Tibetan accomplices and thus captured the seat of power.

Rinchin was a Bon from Ladakh with all the ingredients of pagan culture in him. That he was a Buddhist is far removed from truth. He was under persecution in Ladakh and that is what made him flee his land. It was Ram Chander,[10] who provided him shelter, succour and safety. That he was immeasurably cruel and disloyal is testified by the conspiracy he hatched to get his patron and benefactor hacked to death.[11]

Keen to consolidate his power, Rinchin approached Devaswami, a 'Saivite saint and scholar, for his admittance to the fold of Hinduism. As Hindus have no history of converting people of other faiths, he flatly refused him admittance to the Hindu fold. Eager to identify himself with a group of people in Kashmir, he approached Bulbul Shah, who readily admitted him to the Muslim fold and re-christened him as Sadr-ud-din[12] The dominating factor motivating Rinchin for conversion to Islam was only to entrench himself in the power structure of Kashmir. He had no spiritual upbringing or initiation and the statement made by the sectarian chroniclers that he was thirsty of spiritual peace and solace is a sheer myth. He was brutal which stands sufficiently demonstrated by the fact of his ripping open the wombs of pregnant women of Ladakhis, who were his sworn enemies.[13]

Bulbul Shah, a Muslim proselytiser under persecution in his

native land, saw the fruition of his plans while admitting Rinchin to the Islamic fold. Toeing the line of *sufis* of all hues,[14] he managed entry into and proximity to the Court of a Muslim ruler, who would be instrumental in launching upon the persecutionary campaign against the die-hard Hindus, who despite his preaching of the Islamic tenets could not be attracted to Islam. At the behest of Bulbul Shah, Rinchin as the first Muslim ruler of Hindu Kashmir launched upon the vigorous campaign of converting the Hindus of Kashmir[15] to the faith of Islam, 'by coercion, by taxation, by administration of law, by the sword and by inter-marriages.'[16]

After Rinchin's demise, power structure though considerably infested with outside Muslims again slipped into the hands of Hindu rulers, who could not retain it for long due to their lack of well-devised strategy and also the introduction of subversive elements aided and abetted by outside proselytisers. Rinchin had already signalled the direction and the Hindu-baiters armed with strategies and fanatical zeal strained every nerve to snatch power back from the Hindu rulers. Shah Mir as one already entrenched in the power structure of Kashmir could not rally the majority section of the Kashmirian population for his sectarian and partisan political stances at a crucial juncture in the annals of Kashmir. He was known as the leader of a small colony of Muslims, who had started living in Kashmir after they had sought refuge. The mantle of leadership fell on Kota Rani, who became the rallying point for the Hindus of Kashmir whose land was once again ravaged and cruelly invaded by another Turk, Achala by name, (1331 AD) ferocious and atrocious in deeds. All the areas he passed through were laid waste by the inhuman invader.

Kota Rani saddled on the throne set herself earnestly to repair the damage and ruin brought about by foreign invaders in her land of birth. But, Shah Mir in league with all outside elements, who had crept their way into the power structure, managed to imprison Kota Rani in the fort of Jayapidpur (modern Inderkot), cut off the supplies and sent her messages suggesting joint rule and conjugal life.[17] Finally capturing her, Shah Mir slept with her on the same bed for one night and next morning handed her over to the executioners.[18]

Shah Mir, thus, through political chicanery, became responsible for founding the Muslim kingdom in Kashmir. He did not deem it feasible to fully Islamise the Hindu Kashmir as his atrocious treatment meted out to redoutable Kota Rani was bitterly resented by the Kashmirians. His priority was to entrench Muslims as rulers of

Kashmir. Under the directive of the outside Muslims having come from all Muslim countries, Shah Mir launched upon the strategy of encouraging inter marriages between the Hindus and the Muslims thereby disrupting the family life of the Hindus and also breaking their resistance. He married his two grand-daughters to Lusta and Telak Sura, chieftains of Shankerpura and Bhangila. His son married the daughter of Laksmaka, a Hindu.[19] Shah Mir, flouting the Muslim law, married his daughter, Guhara, to a Hindu. Comments Jonraj, "Damaras (feudal lords) wore the daughters of Shah Mir as garlands and did not realise that they were the she-serpents of deadly venom".[20] Shah Mir's encouragement of inter-marriages in the land of Kashmir was essentially designed to create and spread the support-base of Islam in Kashmir.

That Shah Mir was scheming is demonstrated by the manner he manipulated the assassination of Bhatta Bhikshana and Bhatta Avtar, two scions of the court of Kota Rani. He feigned illness and his collaborators made it publicly known that he was about to breathe his last. As a matter of courtesy, Kota Rani, the ruler, deputed Bhatta Bhikshana and Bhatta Avtar to call on him and enquire about his health. Entering Shah Mir's residence, the two were mercilessly murdered by the armed men of Shah Mir. Enraged by this outrageous act, Kota Rani was out to avenge their death, but was deterred by her courtiers on the plea that his killing would flout all moral canons as he was given refuge in the land of Kashmir. Had she acted and beheaded Shah Mir the same way as she had beheaded Achala, the Turkish invader, cruel and barbarous, the Hindus of Kashmir, addicted to education, simple and non-violent, would have been spared from pains, agonies, woes and unimaginable persecution, which were heaped on them for being Hindus by the Muslims succeeding Shah Mir. There is much of meaning in the observation of Prof. S.K. Koul that the spirit of valour and capacity to fight back among the Hindus is chilled by feeding them on the diet of non-violence, deep-set values and high-degree ethical behaviour.[21]

With the entrenchment of Muslim rule in Kashmir, the Muslims in general and Sayyids in particular felt encouraged to pour into the region of Kashmir for purposes of propagating Islam in Kashmir known world over as the bastion of Hindu religion and philosophy. It was Timur, who had unleashed severe repression against the Sayyids forcing them to march out of their country. The notable Sayyid, Mir Ali Hamadani, only to avoid the 'fire ordeal' and save himself from

Timur's oppression, fled his native land and poured into Kashmir for refuge.[22] He was accompanied by 700 Sayyids said to be his followers and kinsmen.[23] Qutb-ud-din acting as the surrogate of Sultan Shihab-ud-din threw red carpet reception for him and maintained him on state expenses for the period he stayed in Kashmir. He paid three visits to Kashmir only encouraged by the Muslim rulers, whose role for forcible conversion of the Kashmirian Hindus was well within his comprehension and grasp.

Mir Ali Hamadani was essentially responsible for subverting the communal peace in Kashmir by creating conditions leading to the abominable persecution and torture of the Kashmirian Hindus, who clung to their religious faith despite pressures exerted on them. He consistently worked to communalise and polarise the Kashmir polity by the advice he in his capacity as a Sayyid tendered to the Muslim ruler, Qutb-ud-din who had not dared place and perhaps had no plans for putting his state on the pedestal of *Shariat* (Islamic law).[24] As per his directives, the Muslim ruler had not to participate in the Hindu festivals and ceremonies and had to force the neo-converts to adopt the same dress that was prevalent in other Muslim countries thereby establishing their separate identity from the Hindus but linking it up with Muslims inhabiting other countries.[25] It was at the bidding of Mir Ali Hamadani that the ruler was made to divorce one of the two sisters he had married as it smacked of being un-Islamic.[26] The ruler was also directed to put his state on the footstool of *Shariat*, which was flatly flouted by him.[27]

Mir Ali Hamadani's book *Zakhiratulmaluk* is a testament of Muslim intolerance, hatred, distrust and hate-campaign against the Hindus of Kashmir. The advice reads as under:

1. Muslim ruler shall not allow fresh constructions of temples and shrines for idol worship.
2. No repairs shall be executed to the existing temples and shrines of non-Muslims.
3. No Muslim traveller shall be refused lodgement in these temples and shrines where he shall be treated as a guest for three days by non-Muslims.
4. No non-Muslim shall act as a spy in the Muslim state.
5. No difficulty shall be offered to those non-Muslims who of their own choice show their readiness for Islam.
6. Non-Muslims shall honour Muslims and shall leave their assembly whenever the Muslims enter the premises.

7. The dress of non-Muslims shall be different from that of Muslims to distinguish them.
8. They shall not proffer Muslim names.
9. They shall not ride a harnessed horse.
10 They shall not go about with arms.
11. They shall not wear rings with diamonds.
12. They shall not deal in nor eat bacon.
13. They shall not exhibit idolatrous images.
14. They shall not build houses in the neighbourhood of Muslims.
15. They shall not dispose of their dead in the neighbourhood of Muslim *Maqbaras* nor weep nor wail loudly over their dead.
16. They shall not deal in nor buy Muslim slaves.

In the end, the *advice puts that in case the Hindus disobey these conditions, then possession of their lives is halal (lawful) for a Muslim.*[28]

Mir Ali Hamadani's *Zakhiratulmaluk* set a new agenda for the persecution and massacre of the Kashmirian Hindus if they did not succumb to the blind forces of Islam.The book in its contents is highly subversive and set the ground for unleashing an orgy of violence, commotion, disorder and anarchy aimed at corroding and dismantling a social and religious ethos, which had a humanistic base and was high above religious bigotry and myopia. Testifying to his intolerant and bigoted vision, the book openly prescribes for marauding and massacring Hindus if they dared flout the conditions as are couched in un-varnished and brutal language. For not getting many converts to Islam, it also smacked of his frustration generated by the non-compliance of his directions by the Sultan-mindful of his Hindu subjects

Mir Ali Hamadani was the author of the iconoclastic chapter of Kashmir History.[29] He was responsible for the desecration and demolition of the famous temple of Kalishree and the erection of a mosque on the plinth of the said-temple. He set the sordid precedent of blatant interference in the religious life of the Hindus by dismantling and then grabbing their places of religious worship. The mosque has been a bone of discord between the Hindus and the Muslims generating many a religious strife. Phula Singh, a Sikh general, enraged by the demolition of the said-temple, trained his

guns against the mosque.[30] which escaped demolition only at the intervention of a Hindu.

Till Mir Ali Hamadani resorted to peaceful preaching of Islam in Kashmir, he failed to win a convert to the fold of Islam. Leaving the purlieux of Kashmir after his first visit in 1372 AD, he could not find a neo-convert who would call the faithfuls not many in number to usual prayers.[31] But, after his two more visits in 1379 and 1387 AD, he is said to have converted 37,000 Hindus to Islam.[32] This achievement of extra-ordinary dimension and scale is highly baffling. Naqshbandiya order of *Sufis* could not achieve such a stupendous success anywhere they preached Islam. How did they achieve such a success in Kashmir, which had 5000 years old cultural and civilisational history? The historians have found the answer in inveterate and indiscriminate use of force, coercion and persecution launched against the Kashmirian Hindus by the Sayyids aided and abetted by the state power.

In the wake of it, the repression of the Kashmirian Hindus took a new turn because of the advice Mir Ali Hamadani had tendered to the ruler, Qutb-ud-din, the surrogate of Shihab-ud-din. The bigoted Muslims out to launch a persecutionary campaign against the non-violent Hindus formulated allegations against them that they were obstructing the processes of conversion by going to temples, where instead of worshipping and praying, they were weaving conspiracies to overthrow the Muslim rule. Terming it as rebellion, Shihab-ud-din ordered looting, ravaging and demolishing of the Hindu places of worship.[33] Hasan, a Muslim chronicler, records that all the temples in Srinagar and the famous temple of Bijbehara were looted and damaged. The Sayyids made it amply clear to the ruler and his men in control of governmental machine that Hindu religion and Hindu politics had to be totally dismantled and rooted out if Islam had to make headway in the region of Kashmir.

With the advent of Mir Mohammad Hamadani,[34] the son of Mir Ali Hamadani, the persecution and torture of the Hindus touched a new high. Extensive plans for forcibly converting Hindus to Islam and weeding out Hinduism from Kashmir were drawn and formulated. Hindu-baiting with ruthless vigour and fanatical zeal was resorted to. The campaign managers in Kashmir stressed the consolidation of Muslim power-base and with the achievement of that end all-out genocide of the Hindus of Kashmir was launched upon. Mir Mohammad Hamadani made it patent clear to Sikandar, the iconoclast,

that infidelity (*Kufur*) was to be extirpated and stamped out of Kashmir.[35] Mir Mohammad Hamadani was accompanied by 300 Sayyids comprising all shades of proselytisers from Iraq, Madina, Khurasan, Mawara-un-Nahr, Khwarazm, Balk, Ghazni and other Muslim countries.[36] Malik Saif-u-din, a neo-convert to Islam, proved more rabid than the original. He was equally responsible for religious war waged against Hindus. Mir Mohammad Hamadani was responsible for his conversion to Islam[37] and also forged a matrimonial alliance with him only to achieve effective results in matters of extirpating infidelity from Kashmir. Disapproving his policy of genocide of the Kashmirian Hindus, Sheikh Nur-ud-Din, popularly known as Nand Rishi, the patron Sufi saint of Kashmir, refused to accept his superiority as he found him with no achievements in matters of spiritual ascension.

Sultan Sikander under the direct instructions of Mir Mohammad Hamadani took to the idol-breaking[38] as fish take to water. The Muslim chroniclers gleefully designated him as an iconoclast for his demolition and destruction of the marvellous temples of Martand, Vijayesan, Chakrabrat, Tripuresvar, Suresvari, Varaha and others. The temple of Martand (sun), a gem of the Hindu architecture symbolising the high watermark of the Hindu culture and civilisation[39], was destroyed by digging deep its foundations, removing the well-chiselled foundational stones, filling the gaping wounds with logs of wood and finally putting it to flames.[40] Prior to this, huge hammers were used for one full year only to break and vandalise its masterly sculptural works of high artistic merit. Another massive temple at Bijbehara, which had a world famous university attracting scholars and learners from all parts of the country and world, was totally demolished and with its well-cut and chiselled stones and other materials hospice was built still known as Vijyesvara hospice.[41] The temple was previously looted and damaged by Shahab-ud-din. As a piece of clever manipulation, a stone-slab[42] inscribed with Sarda letters purporting, 'The mantra of Bismullah will destroy the temple of Vijyesvara' (a 'Siva temple) was said to have been recovered from the foundations of the temple. A crude attempt to justify the unpardonable crime of destroying an architectural monument of world fame.

Jonraj, a contemporary historian, records that there was hardly a city, a village or hamlet, where the (fanatic) ruler did not break idols. These places of worship represented the cultural history of

Kashmir and the Muslims not only in Kashmir, but globally, suffer from religious paranoia, which compels them to condemn and destroy the past of the countries wherever they set their feet on. This religious paranoia is responsible in a large measure for destroying temples, *caityas* and *viharas* and also their proselytising fervour.[43]

Violating and contravening all norms of civilised life, Sikander, who had pawned his soul to the Sayyid, issued an atrocious and contemptuous government decree ordering the Hindus to get converted to Islam or flee or perish[44] As a matter of consequence, thousands of Hindus were brutally massacred, thousands converted and thousands fled the land only to take refuge in the neighbouring regions of Kishtawar and Bhadrawah via Simthan pass and also to various provinces of India via Batote (known as Baṭa-wath, path of the Bhattas or Kashmirian Hindus). This hateful government decree brought about and led to the first major exodus of the Kashmirian Hindus from their land of genesis. As per the living tradition among the Kashmirian Hindus, only eleven Hindu families stayed back in Kashmir and rest of the Hindu population migrated, leaving behind homes and hearths only to protect their religion and faith.

Drawing a graphic picture of the miseries and traumatic experiences of the exodus, Jonraj writes, "Crowds of Hindus ran away in different directions through by-passes; their social life was totally disrupted, their life became miserable with hunger and fatigue; many died in scorching heat; many got emaciated due to under-nourishment; many lived on alms in villages enroute to the provinces in India; some disguised as Muslims roamed about the country searching their distressed families; their means of livelihood were snatched from them to prevent their education and break their morale; the Hindus lolled out their tongues like dogs searching dog's morsel at every door'.[45]

Sikander's numerous crimes against humanity are:–

(a) He banned music, dance, drama and sculpturing of images, painting and other creative and aesthetic activities of the Hindus.

(b) He put to flames six mounds (1 mound = 37 kilos) of sacred threads worn by the Hindus[46] as a mark of religious initiation only after massacring them.

(c) He killed them if they put a *tilak*-mark on their foreheads.[47]

(d) He stopped the Hindus from burning their dead.[48]

(e) He did not permit the Hindus to go to temples to pray and worship.[49]

(f) He did not permit them to blow a conch or toll a bell.

(g) He destroyed and demolished the Hindu temples only to build mosques or hospices with their materials. The present mosque of Mir Ali Hamadani was built only after destroying the Kalishree temple. The Jamia Mosque in Srinagar was built on the foundations of a Buddhist *Vihara* after destroying it. The majority of mosques are built on temple foundations.

(h) Malik Saif-ud-din, Sikander's army chief (Sipahasalar), used army to convert the Hindus of Kashmir to Islam.[50]

(i) He stopped Hindus from performing their religious festivals and other practices.

(j) Sikander imposed the hated *Jazia* (poll-tax) on the Hindus.[51]

(k) He did not spare even the neophytes as they were suspected of clinging to their original religion.

(l) A Hindu mother giving birth to twins was subjected to *Jazia*.

(m) At the appearance of the new moon, the Hindus were not allowed to worship or take out processions.

(n) With the tacit approval of Sikander and Ali Shah, Malik Saif-u-din stopped the exit of the Kashmirian Hindus by posting guards at all exit points so that they could not escape forcible conversion.[52]

(o) Sikander got hundreds of Hindus drowned in the pristine waters of the Dal Lake and later got them buried.[53]

(p) He got all books burnt. Srivara, a historian of Kashmir, records, "Sikander burnt all books the same wise as fire burns hay".[54]

The worst-ever fury of genocide of the Kashmirian Hindus launched upon by Sultan Sikander, his army chief, Malik Saif-ud-din and Sultan Ali Shah knew no moderation or abatement forcing the Hindus to burn, hang, drown themselves and jump over the precipices only to protect their religion.[55] The genocide of the Kashmirian Hindus was intensified with all its fury when a second wave of Sayyids led by Sheikh Jalal-ud-din Bukhari entered the frontiers of Kashmir. The Hindus and their cultural moorings were ruthlessly destroyed the same wise as locusts destroy and devour the lush green

paddy fields.[56] The butchering of the Hindus touched a new high. The standing artifacts of Hindu culture and civilisation were mercilessly destroyed if they had been spared in the first fury. Parihaspora, a standing testimony to the glory of the Karkotas, was ravaged and its temples, *viharas* and *caityas* were plundered and destroyed reducing them to an un-recognisable heap of ruins. The combine of state power and Sayyids with the general mass of people either hounded out or forcibly converted to Islam did not spare even Nanda Risi, Mulla Noor-ud-din of Jonraj, the patron-saint of Kashmir and was detained and imprisoned[57] for his total and vigorous opposition to the genocidal movement against the Hindus of Kashmir.[58]

He, a real humanist with malice towards none, was pictured as a ruthless proselytiser wrapped in the bleeding cow-hide exhorting Bhoma Rishi to get converted to Islam.[59]' It will be pertinent to put that Nand Rishi, a celibate and vegetarian, was essentially given to meditation for purposes of achieving higher ascension as is enunciated by the Buddhists, the Shaivites and other thought-processes determining the spiritual ethos of the contemporary times. The Sayyids especially Mir Maqbool Hamadani were dead-set against him as he never accepted their religious and spiritual superiority. 'Khat-i-Irshad'[61] as a historical document recording Nand Rishi's acceptance of the Sayyid's spiritual superiority has no veracity and is spurious. The indigenous Rishi movement rooted in the hoary past of Kashmir based on higher values of spirituality and broad values of humanism prepared a mind-set or psyshic frame which was essentially responsible for impelling the neophytes to chase the Sayyids in the streets of Kashmir hatefully calling them the 'cunning Sayyids' (*saad makar*).

The rishi were simple folk affording comfort and solace to all without considerations of caste, creed and religion. They as a cult abhorred violence and hatred and saved themselves from touching extremes, always sticking to the middle-path of the Buddhists. Writes Bamzai, "Like the Hindu rishi or recluses, they believe in withdrawing from the world, practising celibacy, undergoing penances in caves and jungles, refraining from killing birds and animals for food or eating freshly picked vegetables and fruits. They lived on vegetables and endeavoured to follow the yogic practices of the Hindus."[61]

It was the Risi movement of Kashmir purely based on indigenous humanistic values which was chiefly responsible for weaving a web

of culture linking all in an amity of brotherhood. The entire movement was looked down upon by the Sayyids, who took it as an obstacle in their campaign of genocide of the Hindus. Castigating the Islamic rishis, Mirza Haider Daughlat writes, "At the present time in Kashmir the sufis have legitimised so many heresies that they know nothing of what is lawful or unlawful. They consider that piety and purity consist in night-watching and abstinence in food. They are for ever interpreting dreams.... They prostrate themselves before one another and together with such disgraceful acts observe the forty days (of retirement). *In short nowhere-else is such a band of hereties to be found.*"[62]

The ruthless Muslims were a scourge not only for the Kashmirian Hindus, but even for the Islamic *Risis* and non-sectarian *sufis*, who were denounced as heretics for opposing the genocide of the Hindus on religious grounds. They chopped every twig from the tree of mercy. All traces of Hinduism dotting the length and breadth of the Valley were stamped out by massacring Hindus and by ravaging, looting and ransacking their properties and more than most by kidnapping and raping their women-folk. Jonraj, a contemporary historian, laments the absolute subversion of the Hindu ethos by *Yavanas* (Muslims) and compares them to the locusts destroying a paddy field.[63]

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CHAPTER TWO

Sultan Zain-ul-abidin

(1420-70 A.D.)

Worst kind of fanaticism and religious bigotry brought about an end to a well founded culture and civilisation and the region of Kashmir fell to its hands. The paradise (that Kashmir was) was profoundly wounded, nay decimated, not by the Arab legions led by Bin Qasim but by the legions of Sultan Sikander and Sultan Ali Shah. What Bin Qasim was to Sindh, Sikander and Ali Shah were to Kashmir.

It is a recognised fact of history that Zain-ul-abidin was the author of a new chapter of tolerance, mutual good-will and co-existence in the history of Kashmir. He failed his father by not adhering to the atrocious precedent of religious persecution leading to a blood-soaked catastrophe. Nor was he myopic, narrow minded and fired with religious sectarianism. Be it said, "His reign shines out as a sparkling gem amidst the narrow-minded and short sighted rulers of his time".[1] Anand Koul Bamzai records, "In the world around him he could have found little to help him. He was a potentate encouraged to be tyrannical and selfish by tradition and especially by the example of his father, Sikander. Zain-ul-abidin was deservedly surnamed Bud Shah or Great King."[2]

Zain-ul-abidin allowed the Kashmirian Hindus, who had stood the hurricane of the Islamic zealots, to breathe and live without subjecting them to terror and tyranny. He was gracious enough to send messengers to various corners of India inviting the Kashmirian Hindus, who had fled their land of genesis, to return to Kashmir. He allowed the Hindus to burn their dead on payment of a nominal tax, which also was withdrawn and abolished at the behest of 'Srivar, Bud Shah's court historian and musician, who had to pay it at the time of the cremation of his close relative[3]. At the behest of Shirya Bhat, who happened to cure the Sultan of a fatal boil, the Hindus were allowed to take to education and join the services for earning

livelihood without discriminating them. He allowed them to celebrate their festivals and religious ceremonies without any let or hindrance. 'Srivar records that the Sultan erected two temples for the Hindus and also renovated the ones that were plundered and damaged by the religious vandals[4]. He proved large-hearted to settle the cases of the Hindus in consonance with their laws and customs. He revoked the ban on dance, drama, music, painting and other artistic and aesthetic pursuits of the Hindus.

Following the suggestion of Shirya Bhat, the Sultan revived the tradition of historiography, which had suffered a hiatus from the date Kalhan had left it.[5] Jonraj and Shrivar, his courtiers, read out the Hindu scriptures especially the Yoga-vashista to their munificent patron, thus awakening him to spiritual yearnings.[6] Highly impressed by the Hindu view on God, man and the world, the Sultan got some Hindu scriptures, which had escaped the wrath of his father, translated into Persian.[7] He repealed the *Jazia* (poll-tax), which the Hindus had to pay in a state ruled by the Muslims.

The policy of tolerance, good-will and co-existence pursued by Bud Shah as the policy of the state was outrageously denounced and hated by the Muslim fanatics, who were not stamped out but enjoyed patronage from the Muslim institutions. He was condemned as one who had revived idolatory in Kashmir.[8] He was denounced as *be-din*[9] (infidel) for having allowed the Hindus to pursue their modes of worship. He was accused of lending a new lease of life to the Hindu infidelity (*kufur*) by having called them back to their ancestral land. The Muslims accused him of patronising 'crowds of infidels and tribes of polytheists'.[10] There was a sudden dip in his popularity graph when he protected the gold image of Buddha from destruction at the hands of Muslim vandals. A lot of resentment got generated against him when he got Sayyid Ali (Saidal) paraded through the streets of his capital for his atrocious crime of killing an innocent *yogi* dressed in saffron robes. He having repaired some Hindu temples vandalised by his father had to encounter stiff opposition from the Muslim zealots, who rued the day when he as the son of a vadaliser came to the throne only to undo the things his father had already accomplished with real Islamic zeal and zest.

As he was firmly saddled in power, no *coup* could be organised against him. In his death, the Hindus lost an incarnation of Vi'snu (Naranarayan),[11] who had granted them peace without much of torture and the Muslims lost *'Bhatta Shah'*, the King of the Kashmirian

Hindus. Be it said that the Muslims out of sheer dis-approval of his policy stances unto the Kashmirian Hindus maligned him by surnaming him as '*Bhatta Shah*'.

Sultan Haider Shah (1470-72)

The trail of 'justice and generosity', 'peace and tolerance' and 'goodwill and co-existence' as blazed by Sultan Zain-ul-abidin did not prove of much import and significance to the Hindu- baiters, who were instinctively bent upon extirpating infidelity from Kashmir. The fanatical elements lying low in the heyday of Bud Shah could not achieve notable successes in preventing him from putting his state on the pedestal of justice and tolerance. But his demise suddenly led to chaos and confusion in the land of Kashmir. Sayyids responsible for playing havoc with the Hindus and wounding the Kashmirian Hindu polity continued to be in corridors of power, but could not carry on with their policy of fire and sword because of Bud-Shah's full hold and command over the state machine. The rulers succeeding Bud-Shah were by and large weak, usually prone to be misled into undesirable channels by their unscrupulous councillors and ministers. Sultan Haider Shah was one such ruler, who was advised by his barber to put to death the same noble, who had managed the throne for him.

Haider Shah given to bouts of drinking and spending much of his time in the company of beautiful damsels proved ferocious for the Kashmirian Hindus. On the advice of his barber, he committed atrocities on the Kashmirian Hindus. Accused of re-importing practices of infidels, Haider Shah only to disprove the content of accusations took to harassing, torturing and killing of the Hindus with impunity. Having lost their patience, the Kashmirian Hindus got collected in good numbers and set fire to some mosques, which were built on temple plinths or erected with temple materials.[12] The uprising was suppressed by looting, killing and drowning the Kashmirian Hindus. The Sultan given to drinking carouses could not bear with the fact of the Hindu rebels damaging the Mosque of Mir Ali Hamadani, which was built on the plinth of the Kalishree Temple. He issued an atrocious government decree to chop off the noses and ears of all Kashmirian Hindus wherever they be and whatever their station in life was.

As a matter of consequence, the Hindus everywhere were forcibly caught and their noses, ears and arms brutally chopped off. The

Hindus working in the court of Haider Shah were not spared either. They were subjected to the same brutal treatment.[13] There were thousands of brave Hindus, who braved this savagery and brutality. But there were many others, who cried in pain and agony "Na Bhatto aham – I am not a Kashmiri Hindu."[14] The brutal onslaught on the Hindus was accompanied by loot, rape and arson.

Records Shrivara, "Nona Deva, Jaya and Bhima and others were maimed.... They struggled and finally jumped into the Vitasta river.... the arms, noses and ears were cut off even of those Hindus , who were working in the court and were King's servants".[15]

Notes and References

1. PNK Bamzai, *History of Kashmir*, P 330.
2. PNK Bamzai, *History of Kashmir*.
3. 'Srivara, *Rajtarangini*.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. "Introducing Jonraj," Prof. M.L. Koul. published in *Daily Martand,* Srinagar.
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Baharistan-i-Shahi,* MS F23.[a]
9. *Tuhfat-ul-Ahbad,* MSF 106[a].
10. *Baharistan-i-Shahi;* quoted from Prof. S.K. Koul's *Introduction to Jonraj.*
11. Jonraj, *Rajtarangini.*
12. Hasan, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir.*
13. Shrivara, *Zaina Rajtarangini.*
14. Koul, S.K. Prof., *Introduction to Jonraj.*
15. Shrivara, *Zaina Rajtarangini.*

CHAPTER THREE

The Sayyids as Oppressors

The Sayyids had entered the purlieux of Kashmir as proselytisers and ultimately entrenched themselves in the power structure of Kashmir and cornered high offices and positions gaining tremendous privileges and favours for themselves and their kinsmen. They married in royal and noble families and amassed incalculable fortunes. As they were held in high esteem by the Muslim rulers, they misused it only to become an instrument of oppression for the mass of neo-converts and the Hindus as well.

The Sayyids virtually reduced Kashmir to a state of bankruptcy indulging in loot and wholesale corruption. They maltreated the neophytes and considered them as low as dust. Having fractured their conscience by forcible conversion, they added insult to injury by calling them '*Brahmanzadas*' – sons of Brahmans. They indulged in corruption, oppression and drinking. Records Shrivara "Accepting bribes by them was virtuous, oppressing people was wise and indulging in drinking and sex was happiness".[1]

Having gained enormous political power, the Sayyids had to face bitter opposition from the Muslim nobility, which was side-lined, humiliated and disrespected. The neo-converts being utterly ignored in matters of politics and religion rose in revolt resulting in utter chaos and anarchy. But, the Sayyids suppressed the revolt with firmness. The Sayyid Prime Minister of Hasan Shah installed an eight year old boy of his own daughter on the throne of Kashmir. In general, the Sayyids were haughty in their conduct, cruel in behaviour and urged by excessive cupidity, they oppressed the people like the messengers of death.[2]

Sayyids were bitterly opposed to the policy projections of Bud-Shah, who had granted peace and respite to the Hindus. A campaign of calumny was launched against the Hindu infidels forcing them to quit their land or get converted to Islam. They ruthlessly used force against them designed to annihilate them. Calling the Sayyids as

oppressors, Shrivara is categoric in underlining the deep-seated bias they harboured against the Kashmirian Hindus, who had tenaciously withstood the storm of the religious war ravaging them root and branch. In the end of Hasan Shah's reign, under the directives of the Sayyids, the religious places of the Hindus were looted, ransacked and burnt. The Hindus were not heard at all and were shorn of all normal human rights to live and live with safety. Every puny Muslim would take law into his own hands and inflict pains and miseries on them, harassing, intimidating and forcing them to run to the mountainous regions for refuge. Kashmir, for them, was reduced to a jungle where wild and ferocious animals could be seen prowling about without any restriction.

The Hindus under the political hegemony of the Sayyids, who had reduced the local rulers to a state of nullity, found themselves in tight straits. They could not lodge a complaint if and when their normal human rights were trespassed or violated. A Hindu held in great reverence by the Kashmirian Hindus lodged a mild complaint against the tress-pass of his land to the Sayyid officer, who decreed the destruction of his entire property, and also the devastation of the properties belonging to all the Hindus inhabiting that locality. This incident illustrates the condition of the Hindus under the Sayyids, who had actually fled their land to ward off persecution and torture and were given refuge and succour by the very Hindus they were persecuting and torturing only to break their resistance for conversion to Islam.

The Hindus with a Damocle's sword perpetually hanging over their necks were terrorised to the extent of living with utmost care and caution. Even 'Srivara, a notable figure connected with many courts presided over by Sultans, felt so much harassed that he was compelled to conceal and dared not record many facts of historical import while he as a historian was recording the events happening under his very nose. Writes he, "I have abstained from giving even a brief account of this defeat in consideration of the present unsuitable times."[3]

The Muslims in their crusade against the Hindus entered their private lodgings, ate from their pots, disrupted their usual modes of worship and indulged in bouts of drinking and carousing. They would rob them of their domestic animals, rice and other necessities of life and the most avaricious among them went to the extreme of killing them in their own houses.[4] The lands belonging to the Hindus were

confiscated. They were deprived of the means of earning their livelihood. A vasnavite Brahman, Muni, rose in revolt against the Sayyid oppressors, who had plans for the total decimation of the Hindus. He along with other patriotic elements could not stand the state oppression. The homes of Muni and his supporters were ruthlessly ravaged and devastated. Their women-folk were raped and lifted off only to be sold to fanatical zealots. To avoid brutalities, many Hindu women committed suicide by jumping into rivers or wells. The Hindus if clinging to their faith were meted out atrocious treatment. They were put in fetters and their eyes were gouged out and body-limbs cut off. They would be beheaded and their bodies thrown on road-sides only to terrorise men of their faith. 'Srivara has drawn a graphic picture of atrocities heaped on the Kashmirian Hindus by the Sayyids. Crossing all limits of ruthless barbarity, they cruelly beheaded a renowned Hindu physician, Bhuvneshwara by name[5] and to instill fear into the Hindus, threw his decapitated head on the road-side. As if it were not enough, they placed decapitated heads of the Hindus on a pile of wood and coals on the banks of the river Jehlum for the people to watch the grisly scene.[6]

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Notes and References

1. Shrivara, *Zaina Rajtarangini.*
2. *Ibid.*
3. Shrivara, *Zaina Rajtarangini.*
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*

CHAPTER FOUR

Chak Fanatics (1554-1585 A.D.)

Chak rulers harbouring Shia faith pursued the same policy of converting or eliminating the Kashmirian Hindus, who were largely reduced in numbers as a result of the processes of fire and brimstone against them. Kashmir with the pre-ponderance of the Hindu population presented a scenario of religious peace and absolute tolerance and was widely acknowledged as an abode of *rishis* (hermits). There were no religious strifes motivated by the bigoted elements leading to the extirpation and decimation of large sections of a particular faith. The Buddhists, the 'Saivites and the Vai'snavites by and large maintained well-cemented relations based on the widely accepted doctrine of 'live and let live', thus strengthening a cohesive social order allowing freedom to all sections of population to live a vibrant life with least interference from self-styled conscience keepers. But the greatest dis-service, which the Muslims rendered unto the land of Kashmir, was to reduce it by religious strifes, thereby destroying the precious achievements of cultural and civilisational processes resulting in the establishment of an ethos, tolerant and assimilative. That the Muslims of one section or the other gaining political ascendancy are and have been instinctively given to the eradication and uprooting of religious and political dissent.

Historians evaluating the political and social role of Islam in various medieval societies have judged the Muslim ideology of any brand as parochial and stereotyped. What has been astonishing is that murder, loot, rape and arson have a recognition in the ideological frame-work of the Muslims. Booty from loot appears legalised under the umbrella of *'mali-ganim'*; any social strife leading to disorder and anarchy is covered under *jehad* or holy war; any frenzied bigot killing and murdering is nomenclatured as *'gazi'* or *'mujahid'*. That the Kashmirian Hindus subjected to the worst-ever tortures and atrocities wonder if the message of Islam was for blood-letting, arson

and genocide or for spiritual betterment and elevation of mankind at large.

Kashmir teetering on the verge of collapse was destined to witness the advent of Chak rulers, who consolidated their political position through intrigues and political murders. Belonging to the Dardic descent, the Chaks had entered the borders of Kashmir during the hegemony of Shah Mir. It was actually Ramchander as the chief of the Kashmirian army, who rising above narrow considerations, provided shelter to Lanker Chak and his followers defeated in their native land by the forces inimical to them. The Chaks were ferocious and barbarous and that is what made them to grab the political power of Kashmir.

At the behest of Shams-ud-din Iraqi, a proselytiser from Talish on the shores of Caspian, the Chaks were converted to the Shia sect of Islam. They were equally ruthless and showed no mercy to the Kashmirian Hindus, whose numbers had been fast dwindling under the onslaught of the fanatical zealots. Iraqi had no support-base in Kashmir. He cleverly operated under the protective wings of Sheikh Ismail Kubravi, who had shown lots of zeal for furthering the cause of Islam in Kashmir.[1] He manipulated a sharp division in the followers of the Sheikh by boosting up Baba Ali Najar, who was idiotic but wielded considerable influence over the Kashmirians.[2]

Commanding absolute allegiance of Musa Raina, the Prime Minister in the times of Fateh Shah (1506-16), Shams Iraqi launched upon a ruthless crusade against the Hindus of Kashmir. Temples were ruthlessly demolished and mosques built on their sites.[3] The Hindus were terrorised and forced at the point of sword to get converted to the Islamic faith. 24,000 Hindus were converted at one stroke.[4] The lands belonging to the Brahmans were confiscated and men associated with temples were both harassed and arrested only to break their allegiance to the Hindu places of worship.[5] Musa Raina, a convert to Shia faith, was instrumental in piling all manner of persecution and torture on the Hindus of Kashmir. He was a bigot and tyrant rolled into one. He organised an armed brigade of goons under the leadership of a Chak warrior only to loot and murder the Hindus still sticking to their faith. Also the gangsters were entrusted with the specific task of destroying the Hindu families, Hindu temples and Hindu schools.[6]

Suspected of clinging to their original faith and religious credos, the neophytes had to suffer the wrath of Shams Iraqi, who had

observed them chanting mantras by placing their haunches on the hand written copies of the Muslim religious text and also bowing before Hindu idols. Religious fiat issued by the proselytiser and faithfully executed by Musa Raina and other powerful officials of the faith led to the setting up of camps for the forcible circumcision of the neophytes.[7] With a view to brutalising and deculturising them, they were forced at pain of death to eat beef only to shock them psychologically leading to the snapping of their habitual links with the Hindu faith and practices.[8] Shams Iraqi vandalised a wing of Vishnu temple at Buniyar in the district of Baramulla.[9] He personally led the operations of vandalising, destroying and burning the temples of Srinagar city. Some neophytes led by Kazi Chak launched a campaign against Musa Raina for his anti-Hindu activities. Not that they were honest in their intentions, but used it only as a ploy to overthrow Musa Raina from the absolute political power he was wielding. The campaign ultimately led to the assassination of Musa Raina. During the course of mutual rivalries and internecine bickerings going on between Musa Raina and Kazi Chak and his band of nobles, a daring Pandit, Nirmal Kantha, reconverted all those Hindus, who had been forcibly converted to Islam.[10] The attempt proved disastrous for Nirmal Kantha, all reconverted and original Hindus.

Shams Iraqi regained his hold when Kazi Chak was holding the reins of government in Mohammad Shah's time (1516-18.). At the instigation of Shams Iraqi, Kazi Chak gruesomely butchered 800 prominent Hindus only to instill terror in other Hindus,[11] who had not joined the ranks of Islam or had dared move out of the orbit of Islam after re-conversion. Terror forced the Hindus to submit and succumb to the sword of Islam.[12]

Kazi Chak owing allegiance to Shia faith inflicted pains and miseries on the Kashmirian Hindus. He organised and led campaigns for the desecration and destruction of the Hindu places of worship. The material properties of the Hindus were looted and ravaged. Nirmal Kantha proved his daring when he organised and rallied the Kashmirian Hindus for drafting a petition against inhuman atrocities inflicted on them by all hues of Muslims. As the lynchpin of the ruling clique, Kazi Chak took it as a seditious act and what ensued for Nirmal Kantha and his co-religionists was ruthless annihilation and destruction.

The Chaks ordered the slaughter of one thousand cows every day. *Jazia* was re-imposed on the Hindus. Stark poverty stared them

in the face as they were bereft of all means of sustenance.[13] In the words of Shuka, a contemporary historian, "The Hindus were over-powered by the religious intolerants the same wise as the sun is over-powered by the grey sable clouds".[14] Any Hindu wearing the sacred thread had to pay an annual tax to the Chak rulers.[15] Killing, butchering and marauding the Hindus was order of the day.

Under the oppressive rule of the Chaks, the Hindus determined not to get converted to Islam marched out of their homeland to take shelter at safer zones in the neighbourhood of the valley of Kashmir. It was their massive exodus.[16] While marching out of their homeland, a barrage of spiteful abuse, disrespect and contumely was let loose on them only to stall their return to their land of genesis. Genocide of the Kashmirian Hindus was designed only to reduce the land of Kashmir to a Muslim ghetto as was conceived by the top Sayyid theologians.

Notes and References

1. R.K. Parmu, (Dr.), *Muslim Rule in Kashmir.*
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid, Baharistan-i-Shahi,* 78a, 79a, *Tarikh-i-Hasan,* P347.
5. Shuka, *Rajtarangini,* P339.
6. Narendra Sehgal, *Dharmantarit Kashmir,* P127.
7. *Tuh-fat-ul Ahbab.*
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Baharistan-i-Shahi.*
10. R.K. Parmu (Dr.), *Muslim Rule in Kashmir.*
11. *Ibid;* R.N. Singh (Dr.), *Rajtarangini* (Hindi).
12. *Baharistan-i-Shahi,* ff 88 b, 89b.
13. Shuka, *Rajtarangini.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*

CHAPTER FIVE

The Mughals (1585-1753 A.D.)

The ruthless Chaks had to face organised opposition on part of the Sunni Muslims, who rallied behind Sheikh Yaqub Sarfi, the political adviser of Sheikh Hamza Makhdom, known as a saint of Kashmir. The internecine sectarian conflicts between the Sunni and Shia Muslims had evoked the keen interest of the Mughal emperor, Akbar, who longed to annexe Kashmir to his vast kingdom. At the behest of Sheikh Hamza Makhdom expelled by the Chaks from the city of Srinagar only to take refuge in Beerva (Badgam), Sheikh Yaqub Sarfi and Baba Daud Khaki repaired to the court of the Emperor to petition him to despatch his forces to occupy Kashmir, which after some resistance fell to the Mughal forces. As a *Suba* (province) of the Mughal empire, Kashmir broke its isolation and registered advances in many a field as a result of its inter-action with the varied components of a vast empire.

There is no denying the fact that Jalal-ud-din Akbar was highly tolerant and never resorted to the policy of persecution and discrimination against the Hindus, who otherwise had to suffer oppression and untold sufferings at the hands of Muslim bigots. On his visit to Kashmir in 1589, the Emperor came to learn of the plight of the Kashmirian Hindus, who were smarting and groaning under the heavy weight of the vexatious exactions like the hated *Jazia* (poll tax). He repealed the practice of levying *Jazia* and fines on them having been in vogue since the time of the Chak rulers.[1] He decreed that the people exhibiting respect and reverence to the Kashmirian Hindus must be rewarded and those levying taxes on them be severelly punished by pulling down their houses.[2] Akbar's decree proved a great relief to the Hindus living in their homeland and also a source of great allurement to the Hindus, who had marched out of their native place, to return to their homes and hearths which had been looted and ravaged by the Muslim fanatics during the period of their absence. Akbar, to the chagrin of the Muslim fanatics,

allowed the Kashmirian Hindus to celebrate their religious festivals and observe other practices without payment of taxes and tributes.[3] Credit goes to the Emperor for silencing the loud voices of religious discord and bigotry and also for establishing 'the brotherhood of man'.

Akbar's visit to Kashmir was a matter of great joy and mirthfulness for all segments of the Kashmirian population. He enthused them with new hopes and promises of a luminous future, free from religious strife and turmoil. Records Shuka, a contemporary historian, "Now Jalaludin came to see the kingdom of Kashmir, decked with saffron, walnut, fruits and flowers. The wives of the citizens hastened to have a glimpse of the King. One woman pointed out the King to her dear female friend who was quite eager to see him; another exclaimed with a flutter that she had seen the leader of the army; another woman with threats to her child covered her bosom and went. After the people of Kashmir had seen the King, a continuous festivity was held in every house".[4]

A trail of religious tolerance, mutual accommodation and social harmony as blazed by Akbar was not followed and emulated as a hallowed tradition by one and all succeeding him. His son, Jehangir, swerved from the policy-path of Akbar giving ample proof of his sectarian predilections. Enamoured of the beauties of Kashmir, he by and large aspired to keep it safe from the religious turmoils that had been ravaging the Paradise for centuries. His inconsistent stances unto the Hindus of Kashmir were largely responsible for the communal frenzy to raise its ugly head. The Kashmirian Hindus were coerced to marry their daughters to the Mughal officers and *Subedars*. The father of a Hindu girl having repaired to the court of Jehangir to seek justice by pulling the gong of justice brought the atrocious demeanour of a Mughal officer to his notice. Promising justice to the poor father, the Emperor is said to have personally looked into the complaint and to his utter consternation discovered that the Mughal officer had forged a marriage contract with the Hindu girl with the active connivance of the Kashmirian Mullahs. Incensed at this, the Emperor meted out severe punishment to the Mughal officer and ordered the execution of the Mullahs responsible for forging the marriage documents.

Apparently just and equitable in his treatment of the Kashmirian Hindus, yet the Emperor upheld and vigorously clung to the Islamic practices, which mar and besmear his tolerant credentials. He

categorically disapproved of the practice of inter-marriages between the Hindus and the Muslims in vogue in the hilly terrains of Kashmir. A Hindu boy was forbidden to marry a Muslim girl, but a Muslim boy had all the licence to marry a Hindu girl. The present day researchers of the medieval history of India have found many a piece of evidence which cloud Jehangir's credentials of tolerance and religious accommodation.

Jehangir following the foot-prints of the Muslim fanatics was responsible for dismantling the flight of steps linking the temple of Shankaracharya to the river Jehlum near the temple of Goddess Tripurasundary.[5] The sculptured and chiselled stones were used by Nurjahan to erect a massive mosque known as Pathar Masjid. The Muslims never used the mosque for prayers as it had been built by a woman owing allegiance to the Shia faith. The Sikh commander, Phula Singh, was justified to declare the mosque as the property of the state as it was built out of the dismantled materials of a part of a temple of a high architectural merit.

Itqad Khan, a cruel and inhuman Mughal *subedar*, marred and tarnished the image of Jehangir, which was already sullied by his iconoclastic activities in Kashmir. He harassed and persecuted the Kashmirian Hindus forcing them to convert to Islam. He subjected them to cruel levies and taxes only to make them miserable and distressed. He was a sworn enemy of the Shia-Muslims, whom he tyrannised and tortured with a view to decimating them and their faith.

Torture and persecution of the Kashmirian Hindus continued even in the times of Shah Jehan, who was equally enamoured of the beautiful vale of Kashmir. A Muslim mob under the leadership of Khwaja Mam attacked Pandit Mahadeo, looted his house and set it to flames. The mob even set the granaries of the state on fire. Shah Jehan labelled it as a revolt against his authority. He summoned some Muslim nobles from Kashmir to his court and asked Mulla Yusuf, a noble, as to who was responsible for the outrage against Pandit Mahadeo. Mulla Yusuf replied that neither Pandit Mahadeo nor anyone from the public was responsible for it. At this the Emperor thundered and asked if none was responsible for it, it obviously meant the Emperor was at fault. The Emperor called Mulla Yusuf a man devoid of sense, which remark absolutely frustrated him resulting in his fainting fit and subsequent death.

Shah Jehan was equally responsible for indulging in iconoclastic

activities in Kashmir. At his behest a number of temples were not only profaned and desecrated, but also ravaged and demolished. Records Bernier, "The doors and pillars were found in some of the idol temples demolished by Shah-Jehan and it is impossible to estimate their value".[6]

Ali Mardan Khan, originally an Iranian, had taken shelter in the court of Shah Jehan as he was reluctant to hand over to the ruler of Iran the treasure-trove he had come by in Qandahar.[7] As a governor of Kashmir, he proved quite tolerant and felt attracted to the monistic philosophy of Shaivism. He was possessed of a poetic genius and had full mastery over Persian language. His eulogy of Lord Shiva in Persian is lofty and sublime and his praises galore of the Hari Parbhat (hillock) are laudable.

With the advent of Aurangzeb, the Kashmirian Hindus were once again hurled into a vortex of crisis, uncertainty and persecution. The Emperor being a religious bigot re-imposed *Jazia* (poll tax) and other levies on the Hindus. He reduced them as low as dust. He subverted all that what was achieved by his predecessors in the areas of social harmony, religious tolerance and brotherhood of man. Following the dicta of the Islamic Law, Aurangzeb violated all the normal rights of the Hindus including their right to live. His governor in Kashmir Iftikar Khan (1671-75) was cruel and tyrannous. He subjected the Kashmirian Hindus to the worst-ever torture and persecution forcing them either to get converted to Islam or march out of their homeland. As a matter of result, thousands succumbed to his tyranny, but thousands were under pressure to abandon their homes and hearths only to take refuge in the neighbouring regions to safeguard their religion. This could have led to the third massive exodus of the Kashmirian Hindus planned and formulated by the forces of the religious hatred represented by the governor of Kashmir and the Emperor holding the reins of power at central Capital, but got stopped when the Kashmirian Hindu delegation assured the Emperor that they would accept Islam if Guru Tegh Bahadur was first converted to his faith.

In the wake of it, a massive tragedy occurred in the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur,[8] ninth in the line of Sikh Gurus. A delegation of five hundred Kashmirian Hindus led by Kirpa Ram, a learned Hindu, called on Guru Tegh Bahadur at the village of Anandpur Sahib in the Punjab. The Guru was informed of the Mughal Governor's immeasurable hostility unto the Kashmirian Hindus and

of his atrocious measures to coerce them to get converted to Islam. The Hindus wanted the Guru to plead their case with the bigoted Emperor. Guru Tegh Bahadur was categoric in informing the Hindus that it could be stopped at the cost of a great sacrifice. Guru Govind Singh, then only twelve years old, exhorted his father to undertake the sacrifice for the noble cause of preserving and conserving the religious faith of the Hindus. Guru Tegh Bahadur was already under the surveillance of the Mughal Emperor and his band of officers, who doubted his bonafides as a saint of the highest order. In reality, the Guru was silently lending succour and moral help to his compatriots, who were groaning under the Emperor's sword and tyrannous rule. He was applying balm to the wounds inflicted by the outrageous regime of the religious bigot. The Guru was fully aware of the travails and privations of his people around him and was arousing their religious conscience for putting up a stiff resistance to the tyrannical rule. A tirade of calumny was launched against the Guru with a view to detain him and exterminate him. The Emperor Aurangzeb felt no quirk of conscience when he ordered his brutal execution. The Guru fell a victim to brute force, ignorance, religious bigotry and hatred.

Guru Tegh Bahadur has impeccable credentials for entry into the famed hall of martyrs. His cause was just and noble and his sacrifice lofty. Each drop of his sacred blood wrote a new chapter in the book of Indian history. The Guru's son, Guru Govind Singh, founded the order of Khalsa with the avowed objective of putting up a tough battle against the spectre of brute force, tyranny and religious persecution. The disciples of the Gurus have played a glorious role in holding aloft the banner of human freedom and dignity amidst the moribund forces of ignorance and darkness (the Kashmirian Hindus bow their heads in absolute gratitude to the memory of the Great Martyr and consider him as their real saviour. They are once again hounded out of their homeland and have fallen a prey to the same religious bigotry and hatred that the Guru fought by sacrificing himself).

Another outrageous act of the bigoted Emperor was that he ordered his Governor, Saif Khan, to put Rishi Pir, a well-known Hindu saint of Kashmir under detention. He did not take kindly to the close relations that Rishi Pir had forged with Akund Mullah Shah, the celebrated teacher of Dara Shikoh. The Kashmirian Hindus firmly hold that the great saint appeared in a dream to Aurangzeb the same

night demanding to annul the imperial order,[9] but the fact remains that Muslims stoutly convinced of Rishi Pir's spiritual height and attainments interceded only to deter the Governor from committing the heinous act of putting him under arrest. Be it said that Rishi Pir was a real spiritualist given to meditation for the achievement of spiritual ascension and final absorption in the Ultimate Reality. Unlike many of his contemporary saints, he had no political advisors nor was he interested in affairs mundane. He never converted people to his faith, yet he helped all men of all hues in going up the ladder of spiritual elevation. He had no rancour against Aurangzeb, who had ordered his detention and even went to the extent of solacing him as he was smarting under remorse for having executed Samrad, a *Sufi*,[10] whom the Emperor considered a heretic. Rishi Pir introduced the cruel Emperor to the lofty concept of immortality of human soul, which is far removed from physical pains and pleasures, joys and sorrows.

Aurangzeb with his policies of fire and sword, religious bigotry and hatred led to the sapping of the Mughal Empire, which his predecessors had assiduously erected. The entire edifice of the Empire started cracking and crumbling and as a consequence Kashmir witnessed a cruel Muhta Khan asserting his political hegemony over the head of the Deputy Governor, Mir Ahmad Khan. Muhta Khan was the Sheikh-ul-Islam of Kashmir. He instructed the Deputy Governor to execute the following insensate measures against the Hindus :

1. No Hindu should be allowed to ride a horse.
2. No Hindu should be allowed to wear *Jama* (Mughal dress).
3. No Hindu should be allowed to bear arms.
4. No Hindu should be allowed to participate in fairs and festivals.
5. No Hindu should be allowed to put on a *Tilak* mark.
6. No Hindu should be allowed to receive education.
7. No Hindu should be allowed to visit a garden.

The Deputy Governor did not oblige Muhta Khan, the Sheik-ul-Islam, who seated himself in a mosque and issued orders to execute his measures against the infidels. He in his anti-Hindu *Jehad* won a considerable following of Muslims directing them to harass the Hindus by erasing *Tilak* marks from their foreheads, snatching their turbans and shoes, making them to dismount a horse if they were riding one and also tearing off their clothes if they appeared clean and decent.

Muhta Khan's anti-Hindu *Jehad* from a mosque, God's abode, culminated in the loot and plunder of the Hindu houses, which were finally set ablaze.

A Hindu trader hailing from Jullander[11] was feeding Brahmans in a garden, perhaps by way of earning religious merit. Muhta Khan's frenzied mob of Muslims attacked the Brahmans, who fled from the scene only to take shelter in mountain areas. The trader, Majlis Rai, took refuge in the Deputy Governor's residence, which also was raided. The trader had to run for life, but was finally captured and killed. His house was looted, plundered and ransacked.

Muhta Khan deposed the genial tempered Mir Ahmad Khan and assumed the reins of government under the title of Dindar Khan. He organised systematic raids on the localities, which were inhabited by the Kashmirian Hindus, maiming and killing them, looting and plundering their houses and finally torching them. Those, who were able to save themselves from the frenzy of Muhta Khan, hid themselves in mountain areas.[12]

Muhta Khan was a harbinger of chaos and lawlessness in Kashmir. He pursued the anti-Hindu policies of Aurangzeb, who added new chapters to the book of Muslim intolerance in India. He was a usurper, religious bigot and tyrant – all rolled into one. He was ultimately assassinated in the house of a Shia-Muslim. The wrath and ferocious fury of his followers got directed onto the Shias[13], who were given the same inhuman treatment as was meted out to the Kashmirian Hindus. Muhta Khan's son, Sharf-ud-din, succeeded to the office of Sheikh-ul-Islam. He by his atrocious deeds proved an improved version of his father. He persecuted and tortured both the Hindus and the Shia-Muslims.[14]

The vision and approach of Mir Ali Hamadani as elucidated in his book, *Zakhiratulmaluk*, was translated into actual practice by Muhta Khan and Sharaf-ud-din and men of their ilk, who were responsible for the most grisly and ghastly kind of carnage of the Kashmirian Hindus. His 'transformation campaign'[15] against the Hindu dress, language and culture signalled the catastrophe which resulted in the death and decay of an ethos imbued with wider vision of understanding, tolerance and social harmony. The *Jehad* (religious war) against the Hindus, who are an ancient tribe of Kashmir, was started by Mir Ali Hamadani and his son Mir Mohammad Hamadani[16] and continues unabated and unrestricted till present day.

Notes and References

1. Shuka, *Kings of Kashmir.*
2. *Ibid.*
3. *ibid.*
4. *ibid.*
5. P.N. Magazine, *Koshur Samachar*, Vol xxxvii No. 9, December, 1992.
6. Bernier, *Journey to Kashmir*, P. 400.
7. P.N.K. Bamzai, *History of Kashmir.*
8. More details are available in Khushwant Singh's *History of Sikhs.*
9. P.N.K. Bamzai, *History of Kashmir.*
10. *Sufis* were not acceptable to the orthodox Islamists. They were rejected as heretics because their thought content was akin to the Hindus and Buddhists. Islam is deistic, but Sufism is more or less monistic or pantheistic. Mansur was beheaded when he proclaimed, 'I am the Truth'.
11. Birbal Kachru, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir* (Persian).
12. Fauq, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir.*
13. P.N.K. Bamzai, *History of Kashmir.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. Parimu (Dr.)R.K., *Muslim Rule in Kashmir*
16. *Ibid.*

CHAPTER SIX

The Afghans (1753-1820 A.D.)

Mir Muquim Kanth and Khwaja Zahir Didamari, two prominent Muslim leaders of Kashmir, were responsible for inducing Ahmad Shah Abdali to invade Kashmir to bring it under his hegemony. Accepting the invitation, Abdali despatched a strong army of Afghans under Abdullah Khan Ishk Aqasi (1753) to reduce Kashmir. The local resistance offered by Qasim's commander could not stand the Afghan onslaught and Ishk Aqasi established the rule of Afghans in Kashmir. He proved a scourge for the Kashmirians. He indulged in a spree of loot, plunder and murder to amass wealth. Writes PNK Bamzai, "Rude was the shock that the Kashmirians got when they witnessed the first acts of barbarity at the hands of their new masters."[1] The Afghans maintained their suzerainty over Kashmir for a period of sixty-seven years. They were absolutely ignorant, barbarous, cruel and inhuman. Their atrocities on the Kashmirian Hindus beat all previous records. They inflicted brutalities even on the Muslims. They plundered the houses of the rich as well as the poor. Anybody resisting or complaining would be straight-away put to sword. Their methods of torture and persecution were absolutely brutal and inhuman.

Mir Muquim Kanth[2] responsible for extending 'Islamic invitation' to the Afghans harassed and persecuted the Kashmirian Hindus. He was hand in glove with Ishk Aqasi, who, in the wake of his victory, let loose a reign of terror. The houses of the Hindus were looted and pillaged. Huge fines were imposed on them. Any Hindu audacious enough not to pay the fines was brutally murdered. Having failed to withstand the brutal torture of the Afghans, the Kashmirian Hindus started migrating to safer zones in the neighbourhood of Kashmir. Mir Muquim Kanth proved to be their worst persecutor. A popular verse graphically describes the plight of the Hindus.

Ah dil hama khaufo khatr ast darin shahr
kun azmi safar fitna Muquim ast darin shahr

"O heart ! both fear and peril are rampant in the city; prepare

for journey, Muquim (disorder) is stationed in the city".[3]

Mir Muquim collaborated with the cruel Ishk Aqasi in terrorising and persecuting the Kashmirians of all hues. He lent him an active support in his campaign of extortion of huge sums of money from people at the point of sword. The responsibility for reducing the Kashmirians especially the Hindus to abysmal depths of poverty, degradation and slavery squarely rested on him. Realizing that all was lost, the bard sang, *"Pursidam az kharabiye gulistan zi baghban, Afghan kashid gulf ki Afghan kharab kard".*

I asked the gardener the cause of the destruction of the garden,
Heaving a sigh he replied, "It is the Afghan who did it".4

The Kashmirian Muslims having invited the Afghans to capture the land of Kashmir equally suffered their brutalities. They got shaken with terror when Ishk Aqasi applied red-hot iron bars to the body of a Muslim businessman to extort huge sums of money from him.[5] wailing and moaning, they rued the day when their leaders undertook the impolitic step of extending invitation to the Afghans, who were their co-religionists. The bard in Mulla Ahmad sang, '*Shud nai nagma kuchan foryd, harfi Afghan chu...Shah Aqasi dar Kashmir.*'

"Sweet music of the flute has got itself changed into mournful notes as soon as the Afghan made his appearance on the scene. The uproarious Afghan with his dreadful voice makes one feel the terrible panic of the resurrection day. Whatever the Afghan does brings before one's eyes the fearful picture of the resurrection day with all its din and bustle".[6]

With their cup of patience full, the Kashmirian Muslims in their utter frustration and despair tried their best to rise in revolt against the Afghans, but failed for want of leadership. After his misrule of five months, Ishk Aqasi left the valley for Kabul carrying with him a huge sum of more than a crore of rupees. He handed over the Valley to Abdullah Khan Kabuli appointing SukhJiwan, a Hindu trader, as his adviser. At the behest of Abul Hassan Bandey, Sukhjiwan became the virtual ruler of the land. He was popular with the Kashmirians of all hues. He established peace in Kashmir and led people to new levels of prosperity. He enjoyed massive support from the Muslims as well as the Hindus. He was just and truthful. He never contributed to sectarian politics and more than most was above religious bigotry and narrow mindedness. He did not devise persecutionary measures against people of different faiths. Instead he set an extraordinary precedent of attending Friday prayers at Jama

Masiid (mosque) in Srinagar.[7] He dedicated himself effacingly to re-weave the web of social and religious harmony, which was otherwise torn to tatters by the religious intolerants. The Muslim nobility motivated by religious considerations never allowed him peace and was busy in behind the scene intrigues against him only to wrest power from him. Acting as an active agent of Afghans, Mir Muquim Kanth sowed the seeds of discord and strife between Sukhjiwan and his Prime Minister, Abul Hassan Bandey. At the behest of the Muslim nobility, Sukhjiwan's army in the battle against the Afghans led by Noor-ud-din Bamzai deserted to the enemy resulting in his discomfiture and capture. Noor-ud-din Bamzai ordered Sukhjiwan to be blinded and Ahmed Shah Abdali got him trampled to death under the feet of a wild elephant.

What Kashmir had to witness was the revolt of Lal Khan Khattak, a baron of Beerva Pargana, against Noor-ud-din Bamzai's nephew, Jan Muhammad Khan. Lal Khan discomfited the forces of Jan Muhammad and proclaimed his independence. He was given to mad fits, but was a religious bigot. He let loose an orgy of loot, plunder, murder and arson on the Kashmirians in general and the Hindus in particular.[8] Whole families were stamped out and their valuables looted. He put their members either to sword or drowned them in the sparkling waters of the world famous Dal Lake.[9] He was equally cruel to the Shia-Muslims, who were ruthlessly butchered. A Shia, Hafiz Abdullah by name, was accused of propagating the Shia doctrines in the guise of a Sunni. He was produced before a Qazi, who beheaded him with his own hands.[10] His rule lasted only for a period of six months. But it proved quite trying for the Hindus, who were Lal Khan's main butts of target as he was motivated to extirpate 'infidelity' from the land of Kashmir. The Hindus were leaderless and could not galvanise themselves into a resisting force against the atrocious Lal Khan, who humiliated them by resorting to different ways.[11]

Faqirullah Kanth with the active aid and support of the furious Bombas managed to capture power and headed the administration for one full year. He was cruel and ruthless and had his way by keeping Abdali away from intervention by sending him regular tributes. To avenge the death of his father, Mir Muquim Kanth, Faqirullah put hundreds of Hindus to death. His Bomba supporters were equally terrible for the Hindus, who under their ruthless tyranny cried and shrieked in utter agony and were mercilessly butchered in

the streets of Srinagar filling them with nasty stench emitting from the decaying and putrifying bodies. The Bombas also did not allow the Hindus to come out of their houses, which they torched only to burn them alive. Those Hindus, who embraced Islam, were spared the orgy.

The Bomba tyrants and Faqirullah Kanth beat all previous records of ruthlessness unto the Hindus. Thousands keen to safeguard their life and religion marched out of Kashmir to neighbouring regions and also various parts of India. It proved a massive exodus for the Kashmirian Hindus, who had no options other than getting killed or marching out of their land of genesis. This is how colonies of the Kashmirian Hindus came up in Delhi, Lahore, Agra and other parts of India.

Amir Khan Jawansher, a Shia-Muslim also had his covetous eyes on the land of Kashmir. Abdali being in doldrums, he assumed the governorship of Kashmir and appointed Mir Fazl Kanth as his Chief Minister. Given to a life of voluptuousness, he spent numerous nights on the waters of the Dal Lake in the company of his beautiful queen, who was a *Hanji* girl. Fazl Kanth taking advantage of the Governor's carefree disposition beheaded Kailash Dhar in the open court and indulged in brutal killing and looting of the Hindus. Kailash Dhar's body was hatefully consigned to the river water.[12] The event sent deep shivers down the backs of countless Hindus, who in sheer panic fled to Poonch and Kabul, perhaps, for refuge. Saif Khan, the brother of notorious Lal Khan Khattak, torched the beautiful palaces of Sukhjiwan Mal in the city of Srinagar. With a view to pacify the fury of Saif Khan, the Governor got the body of Lal Khan, the worst persecutor of the Kashmirian Hindus, buried in the courtyard of Mir Ali Hamadani's mosque, which was the seat of first *Jehad* (religious war) waged against the Hindu 'infidels'.

Amir Khan harbouring a deep-seated prejudice and grouse against the Sunni Muslims started on a spree of killing them and detaining their prominent nobles. He harassed and persecuted them the same way as they had been harassing and persecuting the Shia-Muslims. To the chagrin of Sunnis, the Governor prepared an *Imambara* on the shores of the Dal Lake for holding mourning sessions on the death anniversary of Hassan and Hussein.[13] He even coerced the Sunni Mullahs to say their prayers in accordance with the Shia doctrines. The Sunnis got inflammed and made petitions to Timur Shah at Kabul for replacing the Governor.

The land of Kashmir had to witness the darkest period of its history when 'Haji' Karim Dad Khan took over as the Governor of Kashmir. He was a psychopath as he inflicted pains on the Hindus and killed them just for the pleasure of killing. He was quite inventive in matters of levying new exactions on peasants, nobles, traders and men of other walks of life. He brought about all-round ruination of Kashmir reducing it to the lowest ebb. He was an inveterate enemy of the Hindu 'infidels'. Without rhyme or reason, he tied them back to back in pairs, put them in sacks and hurled them into the pristine waters of the Dal Lake to meet their watery grave. Looting and plundering of the properties of the Kashmirian Hindus was normal for every religious bigot. Karim Dad Khan being cruel and inhuman heaped all sorts of humiliation, disrespect and contumely on the Hindu women folk.[14] His tyranny unto the Hindus pales all description.

'Haji' Karim Dad Khan imposed a new levy on the Kashmirian Hindus. It was known as *Zari Dood* or Smoke Tax. He accused the Hindus of murdering his two tax gatherers, whom he had purposely kept in hiding. He called the prominent members of the Hindu community and shut them in a cow-shed where dry cow-dung was kept burning only to suffocate them with the fumes. The Haji refused to let them out of the cow-shed until they submitted and agreed to pay an annual levy of 50,000 rupees as smoke tax.[15]

The Afghan governors continued unrestrained in their policy of fire and sword against the Hindu population of Kashmir. In persecuting and massacring Hindus ruthlessly, they had definite religious motivations as their formulated design was only to decimate and steam-roll the remaining segments of Hindu population. Azad Khan, Hazar Khan and Azim were all brutal and cruel to Hindus. Azad Khan was an infernal despot. He felt proud of his marksmanship when he levelled his musket at an opening which he saw in the pathway and shot to death an unfortunate spectator. He doled out a threat to an operator that if he failed in removing the film from his eye, he would rip his belly open. The man failed in the cure and Azad Khan 'verified the threat'.[16] He let loose an orgy of loot, murder and arson on the Kashmirian Hindus in Poonch where they had fled to take refuge. Dila Ram, his Prime Minister, saved some of them from his wrath and fury. That is how he was hailed as their liberator. Writes Forster, "Dila Ram possessed a more liberal disposition than is usually found in an Indian...... His deportment

seemed uniformly benevolent to all classes of people. With his companions he was affable and good humoured. He was humane to his domestics and exercised with a reasonable temperance the duties of his office."[17]

Dila Ram was intelligent and ready-witted which is proved by his conversation with the King of Kabul, whom he explained his *Tilak*-mark on the brow as a symbol for one God, the two dots on the ear-lobes as witnesses to God's existence and a dot of it on throat (Adam's apple) signifying to kill one not believing in God's existence. Being the Prime Minister of two Afghan tyrants, Haji Karim Dad Khan and Azad Khan, Dila Ram with his good sense, intelligence and accommodation was able to reduce their fury and also balm the festering wounds of the Kashmirian Hindus and others as well.

Hazar Khan put Dila Ram to death as he was charged with tending the interests of the Kashmirians without distinctions of creed and religion. He let loose an unprecedented reign of terror against the Hindus, tying them back to back in pairs, cramping them into sacks and hurling them into the shimmering waters of the Dal Lake causing the kith and kin of the hapless victims to rend the sky with their agonising shrieks and screams. He devised many methods of torturing them and putting them to death. Those surviving his fury felt so much terrorised that they forgot the tyrannies of Faqirullah Kanth, a bad persecutor of Hindus.[18] Having imprisoned some Hindus in Baramulla, he dispensed with them by hurling them into the Jehlum river.[19] To harass and impoverish them, he re-imposed the hateful *Jazia* (poll tax) on them.[20] The Kashmirian Hindus, who had made brilliant contributions to Persian language and literature, were decreed not to read Persian. Anybody flouting the decree was straight-away to be slaughtered.[21] Hazar had all the plans to decimate the race of the Hindus, but the deputation of a new Governor saved them from his fury and bigotry.

Azim Khan in his first flush of victory over the Sikhs went berserk against the Hindus. He massacred Diwan Har Das Tiku[22] and Hindus in general. To win the confidence of the Muslim nobles, Azim bestowed new *Jagirs* on them only to enlist their support for his sagging rule. The Hindus had no involvement in the Sikh attack on Kashmir, yet Azim suspected their involvement and complicity. In his wrath against the Hindus, he ousted one and all from the governmental positions and brought Nur Shah Dewani into prominence with a view to satiate the vengefulness of Azim Khan

against the Hindus. Nur Shah [23] wove a conspiracy to kill all prominent Hindus so that others dare not raise their finger against Azim and Afghan rulers in Kabul. He planned to invite all notable Hindus only to intern them in the 'Hamam' of his house till they would fade away to death. But, the entire plot got leaked through the servant of Nur Shah Dewani to Sahaj Ram, who was instrumental in saving most of the Hindu notables from internment and consequent death. Despite it, Azim Khan had to bank upon Birbal Dhar, Mirza Pandit Dhar and Sukh Ram Baqaya for retrieving his government in doldrums due to the depletion of the financial resources. Afghans in general were fully aware and appreciative of the intelligence and good-ness of the Hindus especially their administrative acumen and abilities. But despite it, they fell victim to their religious bigotry and were tortured and brutally murdered at their whim and will. The fragile minority of the Kashmirian Hindus lived in fear, terror, pain and agony. With no abatement in their fury against the Hindu 'infidels', the Afghans forced them to march out of their homeland only to save their life and religious faith. The Muslims of Kashmir provided the Afghans their support base as they shared religious sentiments and empathy with them. There is no example available to establish that Muslims were tied back to back in pairs, put into sacks and hurled into the Dal Lake to meet their watery grave.

Birbal Dhar to retrieve the Kashmirian Hindus in particular from the tyrannical and chaotic rule of the Afghans crossed over to the plains of the Punjab on a horse-back only to exhort Maharaja Ranjit Singh to capture Kashmir for the Sikhs to rule. The Kashmirian Muslims were equally tired of their ferocity, barbarity and persecution. That is how Birbal Dhar, a brilliant son of Kashmir, was lent active support by the notable Kashmirian Muslim nobles and the Maliks (wardens of the passes). As he had failed to collect revenue for the Afghan treasury, Azim Khan surrounded his house by a hundred qizilbash troops only to prevent his escape from the purlieux of Kashmir to the plains of the Punjab. Rapacious as the Afghans were, Azim wanted to see his treasury full even though Kashmir was groaning under severe famine conditions. Entrusting his wife and daughter-in-law to the care of a Muslim noble, Qudus Gojawari, Birbal Dhar with the active support of Dyan Singh, the brother of Gulab Singh, in the court of Ranjit Singh, marched back to Kashmir at the head of 30,000 Sikh troops. Kashmir was lost to the Muslims and slipped back into the hands of Hindus, who celebrated the victory

only to signal their deliverance from the barbarous rule of the Afghans. In the absence of Birbal Dhar, his daughter-in-law was sent as a gift to the Afghan King at Kabul, his wife committed suicide and Qudus Gojawari, the collaborator of Birbal Dhar, was made to hang on gibbets at least for a fortnight.[23]

Notes and References

1. P.N.K. Bamzai, *History of Kashmir,* P 424.
2. Mir Muquim was a Mughal by stock, but a Kashmiri by domicile.
3. *Ibid.* Justice K.L. Kilam, *History of Kashmiri Pundits,* P 424
4. P.N.K. Bamzai, *History of Kashmir,* P 424.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Justice J. L. Kilam, *History of Kashmiri Pandits*
7. P.N.K. Bamzai, *History of Kashmir.*
8. *Ibid.*
9. Fauq, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir.*
10. Anand Ram Pahalwan, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir;* Hassan maintains that 2000 Kashmirian Hindus were forcibly converted to Islam; Fauq holds that Bombas were generally used to tease, harass and loot Hindus.
11. P.N.K. Bamzai, *History of Kashmir.*
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. The Kashmirian Hindus resorted to the practice of child marriage as the Afghans and all of their hue would carry off their young budding daughters. They also cut off the noses of their bright and beautiful girls only to save them from the Afghan savages.
15. P.N.K. Bamzai, *History of Kashmir.*
16. E.M. Forster, *Travels.*
17. *Ibid.*
18. Hasan and Fauq, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir.*
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Ibid.*

21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid.*
23. P.N.K. Bamzai, *History of Kashmir.*

Note : The stock of the Afghans with the Kashmirian Hindus was very low. Read the dialogue of Mirza Pandit Dhar with Azim Khan at the disappearance of Birbal Dhar from Kashmir.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Sikh Rule (1819-1846)

The Sikh period of Kashmir history has been generally painted black by the chroniclers, who have definite sectarian overtones in their assessment of the period. But, the fact remains that the Sikhs gave Kashmir a better government than the Afghans. Records Young Husband, "The Sikhs who succeeded the Afghans were not so barbarically cruel,. but they were hard and tough masters."[1]

Invested with Hindu set of beliefs and credos, they in their objective actions were not religious bigots and intolerant the same way as the Sayyids and other Muslim rulers were. Sikhs were aware of the plight of the Kashmirian Hindus, who all through the beginnings of Muslim rule in Kashmir, were subjected to atrocious barbarities and cruelties. They were equally acquainted with the circumstances leading to the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, who had fallen a prey to the forces of hate and fanaticism. The Sikhs have been in the vanguard of the glorious battle against religious tyrants and hate-mongers. They have a revealing history of tolerance, good sense and accommodation. Had Sikhs not been tolerant, they would have demolished the mosques built over the temple plinths and structures and also outrageously looted, plundered and killed men of other religions. But there are sufficient historical records available which establish that the Sikhs were more humane than the holiest of other religions and were far from inflicting afflictions and agonies on people of other faiths. They, no doubt, were harsh, but were not cruel; they were tough, but were not merciless; they were religious, but were not bigots.

That Dewan Moti Ram, the Sikh Governor, closed the Jama Masjid for prayers has been exploited to the hilt .by the Hindu and Sikh baiters. But they assiduously hide the fact that the Sikh Governor was forced to undertake the measure only when the reports poured in that the Muslims and their religious leaders in complicity with

some outside Muslim elements were conspiring against the Sikh rule. It was not an act of bigotry on part of Sikhs, but only a measure to stop the use of a religious place for unholy activities. Had the Sikhs been bigots, they would have demolished the mosque actually built on the debris of a vandalized Buddhist church the same way as the Muslims in their frenzy dismantled numerous temples of the Hindus in Kashmir.[2]

Phula Singh, a Sikh commander, is said to have trained his guns on the Mir Ali Hamadani Mosque to destroy it. [3] Be it said that the Sikh commander was within his rights to demolish the mosque as it was built only after destroying the temple of Kalishree. As is wellknown tolerance has been the guiding star of the Hindus and their cultural model. Alarmed at the sight of the guns trained at the said mosque, the Muslim notables knocked at the doors of Birbal Dhar, who interceded on their behalf with the Sikh rulers to save the mosque from destruction. This Hindu endowed with generations of education, imbued with an ample fund of understanding and invested with a tolerant view of men and their affairs set a masterly precedent of establishing social and religious cohesion and harmony, which otherwise was torn to shreds by the Muslim zealots. Could it be asked who among the Sayyids interceded with Sikandar, the iconoclast, to stop the genocide of the Kashmirian Hindus? Could it again be asked who among the Muslims made even a slight attempt to deter the proselytisers from inflicting woes, miseries and privations on the Hindus only to convert them or decimate them? Could it be asked why the Hindus of Kashmir marched out of their land of genesis four times till the Afghan rule suffered a decline? Did the Muslims forming the majority segment of total population ever rally for saving them from the traumatic experiences of leaving their homes and hearths under pressures from the religious bigots? Sikhs and many Hindus in corridors of power proved highly tolerant by not persecuting and torturing Muslims for re-conversion and also by not demolishing a single mosque.

Highly appreciative of Birbal Dhar's role in saving the mosque from getting vandalised, Sufi records, "It is to the lasting credit of Birbal Dhar that when a deputation of Muslims headed by Sayyid Hassan Shah Qadiri Khanyari approached him to dissuade the Sikhs from destruction of the Khanaqah, he moved in the matter, used his influence and saved this historic structure from vandalism."[4]

That the Sikh commander declared Pathar Masjid as the property

of the state has been blown out of proportion only to discredit the Sikh rule.[5] It was just a mild retaliatory step to remind the Muslim zealots that they also could be made to suffer religious persecution. The crimes of the Muslims in terms of destroying and vandalising the historic structures of the Hindus are far greater in dimension than the declaration of Pather Masjid as the property of the state. Sikandar established a government department to burn and destroy the Temple of Martand, a marvel of Hindu architecture.[6] Shihab-ud-din looted and destroyed the temple of Vijayesvara and with its materials erected a hospice. Ali shah and Malik Saif -ud- din were the criminals responsible for destroying all temple structures in every town and village, city and hamlet.[7] The Muslim fanatics engaged in the unholy task of extirpating infidelity from Kashmir have been and are even now vandalising and destroying the temples of the Hindus with impunity.

It is a fact of Kashmir history that the Sikhs continued with the practice of *begaar* or forced labour.[8] But it does not make them tyrants. *Begaar* in absence of modern means of transport had been in vogue in Kashmir from the times of Sankerverman, who employed villagers for carrying various supplies to his army.[9] It continued even under the Sultans, who obviously were followers of Islam. They not only continued with the practice, but developed it into a fullfledged institution. Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin continued the practice of *Begaar.*[10] The Mughal rulers in their visits to Kashmir had a huge retinue of unpaid labourers only to carry their goods and other supplies for the journey.[11] The Afghans were highly unscrupulous in the employment of forced labour. The Sikhs, no doubt, did not abolish the practice, but made it continue the same way as all Muslim rulers continued with it. *Begaar* was certainly an evil and it should have been done away with. To malign Sikhs it is trumpeted quite loudly that they employed forced labour for purposes of carriage of goods and materials from one place to another.[12] If the Sikhs were tyrants, Zain-ul-Abidin and all other Muslim rulers and Sayyids who continued with the practice were equally tyrants deserving all condemnation and castigation.

Notes and References

1. Younghusband, *Kashmir*
2. Jonraj, *Rajtarangini*; Hasan, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir.*
3. P.N.K. Bamzai, *History of Kashmir.*
4. G.M.D. Sufi, *Kashir*
5. Altaf, *Paradise Wounded.*
6. Jonraj, *Rajtarangini;*
7. *Ibid.*
8. Altaf, *Paradise Wounded.*
9. Kalhan, *Rajtarangini.*
10. P.N.K. Bamzai, *History of Kashmir.*
11. *Ibid.*
12. Altaf, *Paradise Wounded.*

CHAPTER EIGHT

Dogra Rule (1846-1947 A.D.)

There are ample historical records available establishing the existence of age-old ties between Kashmir and Jammu as two separate regions. Not only that there were matrimonial alliances between the ruling dynasties of the two regions, but also political, commercial and cultural contacts linking the people of the two regions into closer bonds of unity. As per the *Rajtarangini* and other historical documents, the rulers of Jammu provided shelter to many dissenters from Kashmir and also actively participated in many battles fought on the soil of Kashmir. Many political developments of great import were aided and abetted by the rulers of Jammu. The contiguity of the two regions laid the basis for the development of a close inter-action between them despite the mountain ramparts posing serious barriers for such an interaction.

Prior to Gulab Singh making his debut, Jammu had no unified government, but was divided into numerous feudatories perpetually at war with each other. Credit goes to Maharaja Gulab Singh, who founded the State of Jammu and Kashmir through his political acumen, valour and ability to divine and measure future developments. With a view to weaken the Sikh regime, the Britishers through the Treaty of Amritsar transferred the territory of Kashmir to Maharaja Gulab Singh, who had stood by them through thick and thin. The Dogra rulers by and large ushered in a new era of peace and prosperity in Kashmir. Many significant developments in the areas of trade, commerce, communication and education got registered during the rule of Dogras. The British interference in the management of the state affairs not only slowed down the pace of development, but also weakened the state power to a larger extent. Given to the policy of divide and rule, the Britishers played the Muslims against the Hindus with a view to strengthen their hold on the state power only for safeguarding their imperial interests.

During the Dogra period of Kashmir history, the Kashmirian

Hindus were not subjected to barbaric treatment as had been their fate in the Muslim rule. They enjoyed comparative peace and respite. But it never meant that there were no marauders out to loot, kill and maraud them. The fanatical elements were only lying in wait for an opportune moment to harass, intimiate, loot and plunder them. The Dogra rulers subscribing to the faith of Hinduism proved a blessing for such elements. The propaganda inside and outside the pulieux of Kashmir was vigorously launched that the Dogra rulers were inimical to the Muslims, out to kill and crush them. The declaration of Maharaja Hari Singh that 'Justice was his religion' made no impact on such communal elements among the Muslim populace.

The Hindus not given to the campaigns for proselytisation outright rejected the suggestion of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, a scion of the Dogra dynasty, to reconvert the Muslims to the fold of Hinduism as they were forcibly converted to the faith of Islam and were willing to hark back to their original faith and creed. Even the influential elements among the Hindus of Kashi are said to have turned down the suggestion of the Maharaja.[1] This particular instance speaks volumes for the tolerant creed of the Hindus, who, dead-set against the use of force for converting men of other faiths to their religion. They contribute to a pluralistic concept of religion and society allowing every individual to espouse his faith without any interference from any quarter. The Hindus without an exception have worked for social peace, harmony and cohesion and have never launched upon marauding campaigns for conversion.

The battle against the Kashmirian Hindus started off with the cry that they had an absolute monopoly of the state services. The fact of the matter was that they had impeccable academic credentials for entry into the services, but were actually considered for lower rungs of services. It was the Punjabi and Bengali Hindu and Muslim, who were manning all the superior services of the state. The Kashmirian Muslims wallowing in dust and dirt had yet to register an advance in the field of education despite many concerted efforts made by the rulers of the land including the measure to forcibly put the Muslim scholars to schools.

That many of the Kashmirian Hindus, bright people by all standards, who had been abroad in pursuit of academics, aspired to join the state services, but were denied such opportunities by the powers that be.[2] Unlike the Muslims, the Kashmirian Hindus have

maintained a top record of literacy rate, which fact is cognized even by the UNESCO, a vital organ of the United Nations Organisation.

The Kashmirian Hindus recognizable an advanced segment of the Kashmirian society in terms of cultural and academic achievements were responsible for innovating certain new ideas aiming at an advancement and emancipation of the entire fabric of society comprising different shades and strands. They were fully aware of the ills of an exploitative system prevalent in the land of Kashmir sapping the total fabric allowing some to obtain the lion's share at the cost of the general populace. They firmly clung to the idea that the decadent and moribund system of government based on autocracy was to be done away with for the betterment and progress of the entire society. That is why sons of high and very affluent Hindu families contributed to the growth of nationalist movement in Kashmir. Fully cognisant of the role of the Punjabi and Bengali bureaucracy in manning state machine, the Kashmirian Hindus joined the ranks of the Jummuites seeking the entry of the *Mulkis* into the key positions of the state. Maharaja Hari Singh with ample grains of patriotism in him was not averse to the innovative idea motivating all sections of people from the regions of Jammu and Kashmir. The first momentous meeting demanding the entry of the residents of Jammu and Kashmir into the key positions of the state services was held in Jammu and was presided over by Pandit Jia Lal Kilam, a very prominent personality of the Kashmirian Hindu community.

The state subject movement was basically generated and strengthened by the Kashmirian Hindus, who had sailed abroad to invest themselves with modern education prevalent in the West. Fired with new thought and conceptual frame, these youngmen led by Pandit Shankar Lal Koul carried on a relentless campaign in the Indian press for the Kashmirians to be solely employed to man the administrative set-up of the state. They were not sectarian and partisan. They covertly contributed to the growth of nationalist ideology embracing all segments of the state population. It was their patriotic zeal which led to the popularisation of the ideas of freedom, equality and universal brotherhood among the Kashmirians. The introduction of such ideas in the backward polity of Kashmir was of farreaching importance in matters of forging a new movement for the political and economic emancipation of the Kashmirians of all hues. First to be attracted by modern education and modern political thought processes, the Kashmirian Hindus were the precursors of the futuristic

movements forged for shaping new destinies of the Kashmirians as a whole.

Being above narrow considerations and sectarian interests, the Kashmirian Hindus as the vanguard of the Kashmirian society led to the enactment and implementation of the state subject law covering all shades of population without distinction of caste, creed and religion. Pandit Jia Lal Kilam, Pandit Jia Lal Jalali and Pandit Shanker Lal Koul were in the front ranks of the agitation for enactment of the state subject benefiting the Hindus, Muslims and Dogras of all shades. The Hindus of Jammu region also played a momentous role in ridding the state of outside bureaucracy.

Yet another innovative idea regarding the establishment of a Labour Board for looking after the interests of the Muslim labourers migrating to Jammu and the Punjab to earn their pittance in winter months was mooted by Pandit Kashyap Bandhu, a bright son of the Hindu community. The labourers more often than not fell prey to a dreaded disease like malaria and the Maharaja's government by and large was apathetic to their miserable plight. Pandit Bandhu as the pioneer of the idea of Labour Board aroused the Maharaja's interest in the problems confronting the Muslims of Kashmir. He was solely motivated by the design of bettering the lot of the Kashmirian Muslims. The Kashmirian Hindus in appreciable numbers joined the ranks of the agitationists agitating against the use of a despicable nomenclature of *hato* for the Kashmirian Muslim labourers working in Jammu and other parts of the Punjab. What needs be emphasised is that the Kashmirian Hindus as the cream of the Kashmirian society of varied hues concertedly worked for the weal and welfare of the majority population of Kashmir, thus rising above narrow interests and partisan ends.

The bright sons of the Kashmirian HIndu community having come under the powerful impact of westernised education and thought models were the first to demand a legislature elected by the popular vote, free press and free platform for purposes of highlighting the urgent problems facing the Kashmirians of all denominations. The demand over the years snowballed forcing the Dogra ruler to form a legislative body though limited in range and scope of its functioning. The Kashmirian Hindus without an iota of doubt were the first to set the tone and tenor for the coming events in the domain of Kashmir politics.

The Kashmirian Hindus with a powerful background of

generations of education were instrumental in introducing the Kashmirian Muslims to the light of education, especially the modern education. The obscurantist Muslims clinging to archaic models of thought vehementaly opposed all positive efforts in the direction of establishing new type of schools for investing the Muslim scholars with modern education. The Mullahs as the custodians of the Muslim brain and conscience hatefully castigated the Muslims motivated by the idea of putting the Muslim scholars to schools imparting liberal education. Such Muslims were denounced as heretics thereby forcing them to abandon their plans for radicalising and reforming the mind-set of the Muslim community as a whole.

There is no denying the fact that Molvi Rasool Shah despite all opposition from conservative Muslims undertook the vital project of setting up an Islamia school for the Muslim scholars with a view to introduce them to westernised education apart from the religious teaching considered far greater in importance than the liberal pattern of education. The Muslim opinion was dead-set against any form of liberal education as it was deemed to lead to the dilution of Islamic teachings in the mind-set of the blooming buds. Molvi Rasool Shah was physically assaulted and hurt inflicted on him. Even the Kashmirian Hindus, who had stood by him in undertaking the pioneering work, were equally manhandled and hurt. They were warned of dire consequences if they continued to meddle in the religious affairs of Muslims. Despite it, to the chagrin of the Muslim stereotypes, the fact of history is that the Islamia school was established with the active support of the Kashmirian Hindus. The said-school to this day was manned and run by the Kashmirian Hindu teachers of high academic merit guided and motivated by the pious design of drawing the budding scholars out from the enveloping darkness of ignorance and investing them with new visions and dreams only to set a new tone for the Kashmirian Muslim society at large. There was hardly a home in village, hamlet and city where a Kashmirian Hindu would not go with the torch of light and knowledge held aloft by his feeble hands.

Only to invest the Muslim scholars with new type of education, Shri Kanth Koul founded National High School at Baramulla. The said school has rendered a yeoman's service to the Muslims, who deliberately kept away from westernised education. Another such school was founded by Pandit Swaroop Nath Raina, a veteran freedom fighter, at Shopian. It enrolled peasant boys absolutely poor and

deprived and served as a beacon light for furthering the cause of Muslim education. The schools were run by the Kashmirian Hindus and the teachers essentially Hindus effacingly devoted themselves to the task of endowing the Muslim blooming buds with such education as would prove of great benefit in shaping their lives in a different mould. Pandit Dina Nath Hanjura, a wellknown scholar and educationist, headed the National School at Shopian. If you kill a dog in Kashmir, his dying confession will be that he was taught by a Kashmiri Pandit.

Be it .said that the Kashmirian Hindus have been heir to a rich store house of learning and erudition and despite all odds they have preserved their instinctive lust for learning. The currents and cross-currents of history have played havoc with their psyche. They through the vicissitudes of history have been subjected to frequent bouts of loot, plunder, ravage and massacre. Bereft of rest and peace, they have been perpetually haunted by the spectre of insecurity, instability and uncertainity. Forced to march out of their native place only to save their skin in face of tremendous persecution, the Kashmirian Hindus could not but develop resilience and tough fibre to suffer untold miseries and traumas quite patiently. They would have undoubtedly made richer contributions to the formation of culture and civilisation had they not been hounded out every now and then by the Muslim zealots. The Kashmirian Hindus unlike the Muslims have never chosen to be sunk in the quagmire of communal bigotry, sectarianism and narrow interests.

With a view to draw the Muslim women out of the well of backwardness, male tyranny and more than most ignorance, the Kashmirian Hindus under the inspiring guidance and leadership of Pandit Sri Kanth Toshkhani, Professor of Philosophy, Sri Pratap College, Srinagar established a school for Muslim girls, who were initiated and given impetus to come to schools for learning 3 R's. What is highly significant is that Prof. Toshkhani and the Kashmirian Hindu lady teachers launched upon a door-to-door campaign mobilising the Muslims to put their daughters to the school. Hindu lady teachers would even go to the homes of Muslim girls only to provide them with more of guidance as they were first generation learners of backward and ignorant parents, who had consciously kept away from the light of education despite countless incentives provided to them by the Hindu ruler and his government.

The Dogra period of Kashmir history was marked by the British

advent into Kashmir. The Dogras could not but succumb to the pressures put on them by the British masters working assiduously for watching the imperial interests in Kashmir, which had come to acquire a position of importance in their total game-plan. It was natural for the British officers to have come into contact with the Kashmirian Hindus, who were present in the administrative set-up at the lower rungs. They were impressed by the suavity, cultured demeanour, general ability and intelligence of the Kashmirian Hindus. They appreciated their qualities of head and heart especially their administrative skills. That the stock of the Kashmirian Hindus was very much up with the Britishers gets testified by the mention various European travellers have made about them in their travelogues and other tomes. To them, a Kashmirian Hindu was conservative in sticking to his religious practices, but modern in adapting himself to new thought nuances and manner of dress. But, the British encouragement of Kashmirian Hindu was short-lived and they wove and hatched conspiracies not only to derogate them, but also to get them looted, plundered and killed.

The Britishers developed hatred and revulsion for the Kashmirian Hindus when they got attracted to new developments in the arena of Indian politics initiated and led by the Indian National Congress symbolising the aspirations of the Indian masses for a new order based on self-rule, democracy and free thinking. The highly educated sections of the Kashmirian Hindus directly participated in the struggle for freedom from the British yoke and contributed their mite to the spread and dissemination of new thought structures as enunciated by Gandhi and Nehru at the national level and Marx, Engels and Lenin at the international level. The *Testament of New Kashmir* contains all the seed ideas and thought trends, which the bright sons of the Kashmirian Hindu community had imbibed through their intelligent and painstaking study of the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin and a host of Marxist thinkers.

Kashmir had an intelligent group of Radical Humanists, who through their ideological discourse led to the dissemination of their ideas in the backward polity of Kashmir. The fact remains that they could not win many sympathizers for their ideology among the Muslims of Kashmir. The proponents of the ideology of Radical Humanism were mostly Kashmirian Hindus hailing from all walks of life.

The British officers stationed in Kashmir and elsewhere felt a

cold shiver down their spine when the Kashmirian Hindus led by their fiery sons demonstrated against the arrest of Gandhi and supported his clarion call for boycott of foreign goods. The bonfire of foreign goods in the S.R. Ganj locality of Srinagar in 1930 amply demonstrated the patriotic zeal and fervour of the Kashmirian Hindus, who had their gaze fixed on new political forces shaping and emerging both on national and international scene. Unlike many other communities, they were not bogged down in the mire of communal politics. It will not be out of place to mention that the first memorandum submitted to Maharaja Hari Singh by the Muslims of Kashmir sought a ban on Indian National Congress and the activities of the Kashmirian Hindus fraternising with the organisation.[3]

The Britishers feeling alarmed at the new orientation given to the Kashmirian politics by the Kashmirian Pandits took no time in hatching conspiracies against them only to deflect them from the path of patriotism and nationalism. They in complicity with the All India Muslim Conference of Lahore and a group of Muslims in Jammu let loose a flood of vicious propaganda on the backward and illiterate masses of Kashmir arousing their communal and sectarian passions. Allegations were levelled against some Hindu constables of Jammu only to foment communal trouble. A Hindu police sub-inspector, Babu Khem Chand, was accused of heresy as he had not permitted a Molvi to read out *khutba*. He was dismissed from services even though the magistrate in his judgment had made it amply clear that he was not reading *Khutba* but delivering a political speech against the ruler characterising him as cruel and tyrant.[4] Another Hindu head constable, Labh Ram, was accused of desecrating the *Quran*.[5] The government feeling jittery dismissed the employee without probing the entire incident. The Muslim groups communally oriented did not feel satiated by the dismissal of the two employees as they had different plans up their sleeves only to be materialised in the loot, murder and arson of the Kashmirian Pandits. The Reading Room Party led by Sheikh Abdullah was an abettor of the vicious propaganda unleashed against the Hindus, who had been the main target of the Muslim politics. The life size posters instigating the Muslims to protest and revolt proved a catalyst for the communal frenzy engulfing the Kashmirian Pandits.[6]

On 13th of July, 1931, history for the Kashmirian Hindus got repeated. They were put to an orgy of loot, murder and arson. Their houses and business establishments were ruthlessly looted and put to

flames. They were cruelly killed and mercilessly beaten and roughed up. As per the official records, numerous Kashmirian Hindus were killed and countless seriously wounded. The worst affected areas were Maharaj Ganj and Vicharnag localities in Srinagar. Hindus everywhere in the valley of Kashmir were subjected to harassment, intimidation, persecution and torture. The goons had their heyday everywhere especially in Srinagar indulging in loot, murder and arson. Wakefield, the then Home Minister, turned a Nelson's Eye to all the happenings corroding public order. He was fiddling with the Resident while the valley was burning. The British officers mostly owing allegiance to the British network of intelligence in complicity and connivance with the communal forces in the Valley were guilty of looting , murdering and pillaging the Kashmirian Hindus.

One Qadir, a bearer in the employ of an European, was responsible for instigating the Muslim crowd got collected in the Mir Ali Hamadani Mosque in Srinagar to choose their representatives for a meeting with the Maharaja. He was tried for sedition and during the course of hearing held in camera, the Muslim crowds gate crashed into the Central Jail in Srinagar only to disrupt the judicial process. The police posse stationed on duty fired leaving ten Muslims killed. What ensued was mayhem, loot and murder for the Hindus of Kashmir. The government pursued a policy of drift and never brought the looters and killers to book for the crimes against the fragile minority of Hindus. Those responsible for letting loose a reign of terror for the helpless and hapless Hindus were hailed and bolstered up as freedom fighters and even as martyrs. The communal orgy had its full sway for two weeks and Maharaja Hari Singh's government proved utterly incapable of providing protection to the victims of loot, murder and arson. As per government records, the total loss suffered by the Hindus in the destruction of their properties was estimated to be exceeding a crore of rupees.[5]

Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz,[7] known for his pro-Pak leanings, was not forthright in condemning the Muslim communalism, which had been systematically working for the annihilation of the Hindu minority in Kashmir. He span a wayward theory for justifying the loot and murder of the Hindus, who were equally poor, deprived and bereft. Why loot and murder only the Hindus of Kashmir? Why were not the big sharks among the Muslim landed gentry looted and killed ? Shree Bazaz had his own specific approach to the evaluation of the communal politics in Kashmir, which perhaps fitted in the entire

scheme of things he had in mind for Kashmir.

Sheikh Abdullah is recorded to have characterised the communal happenings on 13th July, 1931 as the handiwork of the goons, who stole the occasion for indulgence in loot and murder of the Kashmirian Hindus. His comment came in the wake of the address he made to the Kashmirian Hindus at Sheetalnath for the first time in his political career.[8]

The Kashmirian Hindus as the hapless victims of loot, murder and arson demanded an impartial enquiry into the communal incidents. An Enquiry Committee was set up, but it stopped short of launching a thorough probe into the entire gamut of happenings leading to the infliction of worst ever atrocities on the Kashmirian Hindus. Not punishing the guilty, the government ordered the release of those arrested during riots. Enquiry was practically shelved and truce arranged between the government and the communal agitators. The Kashmir Muslim Conference functioning in Lahore did not take kindly to the truce and did everything possible to wreck it with the obvious objective of fuelling the communal fires to engulf the entire State of Jammu and Kashmir. The Muslims operating at Lahore in connivance with the Britishers virtually succeeded in stoking the communal fires in the region of Jammu when the Hindus of Mirpur were subjected to a spree of loot, murder and arson. Its reverberations were sensed in Uri, Baramulla, Srinagar and Anantnag in the region of Kashmir which were convulsed by communal disturbances.[9]

Dr. Iqbal closely associated with the Muslim Conference of Lahore actually worked against the truce between the state government and the communal agitators.[10] His plans were to convert the communal disturbances into an all-out crusade against the Hindu Maharaja and the Kashmirian Hindus. He had even ambitions of becoming the Prime Minister of the state of Jammu and Kashmir as got revealed by the letter he wrote to Maharaja Hari Singh.[11] Calvin as the Prime Minister of the state was pre-informed of the contents of the letter by intelligence agencies operating in Lahore. Dr. Iqbal was categoric in telling the ruler of the state that his appointment as the Prime Minister of the state would end all strife tearing the state politics.

The 13th July, 1931 disturbances based on Muslim frenzy were generated and led by the Muslim land-lords, shawl tycoons and other richer sections of the Muslim community. The sole motive behind the disturbances was to wrest concessions from the ruler in matters

of 'better positions, social recognition and more gains in economic undertakings'. The loot, murder and arson launched against the Kashmirian Hindus reflected the perennial religious hatred the Muslims have been harbouring against the Hindus of Kashmir. The Muslims worked in complicity with the Britishers, who had smelt a rat in the political activities of the Hindus vying with the nationalists and new wave of mass enthusiasm gaining momentum for freedom from British fetters. The sudden appearance of Qadir, who was employed with an European, testifies beyond doubt that the disturbances were planned and manipulated by the Britishers in connivance with the Muslim agents working at their beck and call.

The 13th July, 1931 communal orgy was preceded by an outrageous act of kidnapping, wrongfully confining and murdering a Kashmirian Hindu girl, Durgi by name.[12] It sent shock waves in the miniscule minority of the Hindus reminding them of the same type of persecution and torture that they were subjected to throughout the Muslim rule. What was worst that the state police lathi-charged the funeral procession of one thousand Hindus accompanying the dead body of the victim to the cremation ground for last rites. Enraged by the heinous crime committed against an innocent girl, the Hindus in unprecedented numbers got collected in the Raghunath Temple of Srinagar only to adopt two resolutions, one demanding an impartial enquiry into the circumstances leading to the murder of the Kashmirian Hindu girl, the other expressing shock and anguish over the police high-handedness of charging a funeral procession.[13] The government never acted as all its operational capacities were paralysed by the interference of the Britishers in the state affairs.

With a view to achieve their political ends the Britishers forced and pressurised the Maharaja to constitute a Grievances Commission for a probe into the complaints of the people of Kashmir. The Commission was chaired by B.J. Glancy, who was directly linked with the British Intelligence Department. The Hindu members on the Commission from Jammu resigned when the Muslim members from Jammu and Kashmir demanded a change in the Hindu Personal Law facilitating the fresh converts to Islam to own their hereditary properties even after conversion. The Kashmirian Hindus directed their member, Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz, to withdraw from it, but he did not oblige them and continued to be on the Commission representing none.

The Commission motivated by the sole design of damaging the

legitimate interests of the Kashmirian Hindus got exposed by tendering biased recommendations to the ruler. It did not take up for consideration the vital issue of settling the age-long dispute over Kalishree Temple,[14] which was forcibly occupied and demolished for erection of the Mir Ali Hamadani Mosque.* In its open hostility to the Kashmirian Hindus, the Commission failed to recommend the handing over of the Hari Parbat, Shankaracharya hillocks and the Buddhist sites to the Hindus while it made the recommendation of handing over Pathar Masjid, Bulbul Shah Khanaqah and Dara Shikuh Khanqah to the Muslims. The Hindus were not handed over their properties on the plea that some graves had been dug around the two hillocks. Nor were the Muslims asked to use the bathing *ghat* of the Kalishree Temple a few yards away from the portion used by the Kashmirian Hindus, who had to witness the detestable Muslim practice of opening their trousers if they would have one on or just throwing the Phiran (a long woollen cloak) up for cleansing their unclean bottoms. The Hindu demand for the construction of a shed at the point of worship on the river *ghat* only to shelter them from inclement weather was cruelly rejected.

Unfair to the Kashmirian Hindus, the Commission recommended the scaling down of academic merit in favour of the Kashmirian Muslims thereby blocking the entry of the Hindus with high academic merit into the state services. The Maharaja had already embarked upon the policy-path of disregarding the claims of the Kashmirian Hindus to the state services.[15] The Kashmirian Hindus through their representative, Dr. R.K. Bhan[16] M.A. F.R.S had supplied the ruler with the statistical data regarding the severe unemployment prevailing among the highly educated Hindu youth.

The Muslim members on the Glancy Commission demanded that the state police be asked to desist from intervening in matters of fresh converts of Islam. The brazen-faced demand patently demonstrated the Muslim plans for launching upon conversion campaigns despite the fact that the state had a Hindu ruler. There were numerous Muslim agencies operating for fresh converts to Islam. They worked under a well-formulated design and were financially supported by inside and outside agencies. Keeping the police forces at bay the Muslim majority would resort to time-tested weapons of harassment, intimidation, allurement and final hounding out and liquidation of the Kashmirian Hindus.

The Muslim members on the Commission in their note of dissent

demanded that the Maharaja be asked not to impose a ban on the Muslims of Kashmir and Frontier Districts to have and receive arms.[17] The demand underpinned the motives of arming the Muslims for purposes of launching an armed crusade against the fragile minority of Hindus in Kashmir. •

Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz, who had no mandate from the Kashmirian Hindus, in his note of dissent put that the mosque at Idgah with a wall around it be allowed to come up only if rest of the Idgah grounds were left intact and open to all communities for recreational and grazing purposes.[18]

The British Resident in pressurising Maharaja Hari Singh to appoint the Glancy Commission was motivated by the sole design of mobilising the Muslims against the Hindu ruler in furtherance of the imperial interests. Many agents working only to further the British designs were enrolled from the Muslim ranks. Sheikh Abdullah himself is alleged to be a British agent, who worked hand in glove with the British masters.[19] The recommendations of the Glancy Commission institutionalised communalism dividing the Kashmirian society at large into twain. Capitalizing on the deep rooted hatred of the Muslims against the Hindus, the Britishers only to humble down the Maharaja managed to appease the Muslims through the Glancy Commission. The fact remains that the Commission never upheld the Muslim contention of non-representation of the Muslims in the state services, but rendered an immeasurable damage unto the Kashmirian polity by polarising it on communal grounds.

The lop-sided and biased recommendations of the Glancy Commission were prominently marked by an appeasement of the Muslim majority of Kashmir. The legitimate rights and interests of the Kashmirian Hindus were ruthlessly sacrificed and trampled upon. Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz was patently blamed and held responsible for the undue concessions showered on the Muslims by the Maharaja in pursuance of the recommendations made by the Glancy Commission. The Kashmirian Hindus sharply reacted and ground was set for fullfledged agitation. Out to clamour for their rightful interests, the Hindus in massive numbers held demonstrations denouncing Glancy and the Government of Maharaja Hari Singh.[20] The agitation known as the Roti (bread) Agitation in the history of the Kashmirian Hinduș led to the emergence of an astute leadership working under the wise and prudent advice and guidance of Pandit Kashyap Bandhu, who in his autobiography yet to be published has made startling

revelations about the Sheikh. With Sheetalnath as the centre stage of the agitational activities, the Hindus highlighted their economic hardships having ensued from the governmental policy of blocking their entry into the state services. Instead of conceding their legitimate demands, the government let loose a reign of repression against the Hindus. They were lathi-charged, baton charged, arrested and imprisoned and hurt with all sorts of repressive and coercive measures. To cap it all, the Muslims in large numbers assaulted the Kashmirian Hindus only to throttle their voice against the repression inflicted on them. They did everything to disrupt and wreck their movement as a definite nexus had already developed between the Britishers and the Muslims for pushing the Kashmirian Hindus to the wall. Despite the concerted attempts to disrupt the movement by vested interests, it continued with full zest and vigour for more than six months. It was a highly organised and disciplined movement focussing on economic problems. It will be no exaggeration if it be put that the Bread Movement set the tone and tenor for all future movements in the history of Kashmir as it was secular in content highlighting economic demands and was never directed against the Muslims whose major grievance of non-representation in government services was not upheld even by the Glancy Commission.

Toeing the old strategy of grabbing the Hindu places of worship, the Muslims whipped up mass frenzy and let loose their brute force to unlawfull occupy two places of Hindu worship, one at Sahyar and the other at Narparistan in Srinagar. The Narparistan place of worship known as Narishwari Temple[21] was demolished and a grave installed at its *sanctum sanctorum.* It was done in total violation of civilised canons guiding relations between various communities in a pluralistic society. The Hindus raised a powerful voice against the unjust acts resulting in communal tension. They highlighted the problem with the powers that be, but as usual no positive action for restoration of the two temples to their rightful owners was ever taken. The Muslim onslaught on the Hindus and their places of worship continued even in Dogra times.

In the backdrop of communal tensions leading to loot, murder and arson of the Kashmirian Hindus, the Muslims rallied under the banner of the Muslim Conference espousing sectarian and communal politics. Training their guns against the Hindus, the Muslim politicians in complicity with groups of the same hue operating in Jammu and Lahore under the umbrella of British patronage.

highlighted non-secular agenda based on narrow-mindedness, religious bigotry and myopia. The Kashmirian Hindus could not think of joining hands with such forces. But, they did not fail the new radical elements, who showed appearance within the ambience of the Muslim Conference for secularising and broadbasing their movement directed to the achievement of political and economic emancipation of all components of the Kashmirian populace. The Kashmirian Hindus applied their shoulder to the wheel of Muslim politics investing it with vigour, enthusiasm and more than most new political direction. In appreciable numbers, they participated in all the functions designed to celebrate the Responsible Government Day. They joined the ranks of the labour movement when its gates were thrown open to them. The Kashmirian Hindu intellectuals did not thwart, but aided the flowering of new forces within the Muslim politics.

Credit goes to Sardar Budh Singh, who unfurled banner of revolt against the then moribund system perpetuating forced labour *(begaar)*, unscientific land revenue and land relations and set a new agenda for wholesale reforms. In fact, it was he only who conveyed his radical views regarding the politico-economic set-up prevalent in the state to Sheikh Abdullah who till then was wallowing in the quagmire of communal politics shaped by the shawl-barons, *Jagirdars* and beard-flaunting *Molvis*.

The Hindu leaders like Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz, Pandit Jia Lal Kilam, Pandit Sham Lal Saraf, Pandit Kshyap Bandhu and Sardar Budh Singh were responsible for forging a new nationalist agenda for all Kashmirians without distinction of caste, creed and religion. In fact, Kashyap Bandhu having come from Lahore in 1930 was the first to suggest the formation of a united front for highlighting common problems of all communities. As a result of inter-action between the leaders of the two communities, a new united front was formed for purposes of highlighting economic and political problems concerning the Kashmirians as a whole. The National Demand issued in August, 1938 was signed among others by Pandit Jia Lal Kilam, Pandit Sham Lal Saraf and Sardar Budh Singh. It is enough to demonstrate that the Kashmirian Hindus joined the ranks of Muslims only when the Muslims thought it expedient to part ways with sectarian politics for forging a new unity among all sections of the Kashmirians.

Having taken birth from the debris of Muslim Conference, the National Conference enthused all segments of the Kashmirian

population. Its secular credentials set a new pace for the politics of Kashmir. The Kashmirian Hindus declared their parent organisation of All Kashmiri Pandit Yuvak Sabha as a socio-cultural body devoting itself to the objectives of reforming their society and preserving their cultural heritage. National Conference, they declared, was their political forum for achieving all objectives as were graphically outlined in the Testament of New Kashmir.

It was the cream of the Kashmirian Hindu society that was directly responsible for formulating the 'New Kashmir' manifesto only to invest the struggle with a definite direction. A brilliant group of young communists under the leadership of Dr. N.N. Raina[22] was operating within the National Conference spear-heading a new agenda. Those youngmen mostly hailing from middle-class Hindus families were motivated and enthused by the Marxist ideology pointing to new destinations of establishing an exploitation-free social order in sharp contrast to capitalist mode of social and political structure. They were mostly responsible for introducing the nationalist movement to the concept of socialist pattern of society based on equality, democracy and free from exploitation. The Communists of Kashmir had direct links with the Communist Party of India, which has played a glorious role in anti-Imperialist struggle waged by the Indian masses. Dr. Raina was widely known and shown high esteem as a high-calibre Communist intellectual of Kashmir. Among others, two prominent Communists from the Punjab, Mr. B.P.L. Bedi and Mrs. Freda Bedi, late Moti Lal Misri, late D.P. Dhar and Dr. N.N. Raina were the persons, who were associated with drafting the 'New Kashmir' manifesto for the Kashmirians with the sole objective of concretising the goals they were supposed to achieve through the struggle. The Communists organised study circles for imparting political education to the rank and file of National Conference only to save the movement from going lumponic. But Sheikh Abdullh got the study circles stopped from functioning on the plea that the organisers were propagating communism among the Muslim youth.[23]

Even after re-christening the Muslim Conference as National Conference, the spectre of communalism continued to haunt the leadership, which had a track record of communal and sectarian politics. Sheikh Abdullah, the tallest of the Muslim leaders, did not abandon the Hazratbal Shrine as the focal point of his political activities. Clinging firmly to the Muslim concept of combining religion with politics, the Sheikh was always found lacing his political

orations with the religious history of Islam. In his moments of utter despair ensuing from his political failures and inconsistencies, he often bradished the stick of Islam to quieten and quench opposition and dissent. Suspecting a dip in his popularity graph, he would more often than not jaunt about the streets of Srinagar either exhorting the Muslims to observe fasts during the month of Ramadan or collecting funds for erecting a mosque. His characterisation of the Hindu minority of Kashmir as *ammanat* (trust) was co-terminus with the status of *Zimmies* as defined in the Islamic texts. Not that the Hindus were equal participants in a democratic order, but were subservient to the Muslim canons which were more obeyed in their non-observance than observance.

Sheikh Abdullah's commitment to secular outlook in spirit and deed became all the more suspect when he used the secular platform of National Conference for celebrating Id-i-Milad on 24th April, 1940. In his characteristic oration, he launched a vituperative tirade against the Hindu society, contemptuously derided the religion of the Hindus and to cap it all made an unwise remark that Islam was the sun and other religions were stars underpinning that when the sun appears, other stars get eclipsed.

The Sheikh's utterances regarding the comparative greatness of[24] Islam were not favourably relished by the Hindu leaders of National Conference. In protest, they climbed down the dias. On 28th of April, 1940, the Hindu members of National Conference raised the issue with the Sheikh, who having lost his cool thundered that *he was a Muslim first and a Muslim last.*[25] It generated tremendous bitterness leading to the resignation of Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz, Pandit Jia Lal Kilam and Pandit Kashyap Band hu from the Working Committee of National Conference. It was only through the good offices of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru that the yawning gulf was stemmed from widening thereby saving the organisatin from tearing apart.

The fact of history is that Sheikh Abdullah led a powerful mass movement for founding a new political and economic order in Kashmir and other parts of Jammu region inhabited by various ethnic groups. He rejected the two nation theory of the Muslim League, yet he upheld and subscribed to the idea that the Muslims were a *'qaum'*. The posture of the Shiekh unto the Treaty of Amritsar purporting the sale of Kashmir and other adjoining areas to Maharaja Gulab Singh for a sum of 75 lac rupees *(Nanakshahi)* smacked of pan-Islamism emphasising that the Kashmirian Muslims alone were

purchased and sold for a few paise each, ignoring that the Kashmirian Hindus, Sikhs and the Ladakhi Buddhists were equally purchased and sold for a few coins. Pan- Islamism with its fountain-head in Dr. Iqbal[26] had its reverberations in the utterances of Sheikh dilating on the total annulment of the Treaty of Amritsar as an imperative condition for freeing the Muslims of Kashmir essentially from the thraldom of the Maharaja, obviously a Hindu ruler. How the Sheikh would have posed himself unto the said-Treaty if the state had a Muslim ruler, a *Nawab*, is a moot issue for political guess-work and speculation ?

The ruler of the state of Jammu and Kashmir as per the India Independence Act of 1947 and the India Act of 1935 was vested with the sole right to accede to either of the two dominions of India and Pakistan having come into being as an outcome of the partition plan promulgated on 3rd June, 1947. Maharaja Hari Singh and his Prime Minister, Pandit Ramchandra Kak, took their own time and prevaricated in the exercise of the options. As can be gleaned from available tomes dilating on the period, it is authentic to put that the Maharaja was interested in maintaining the independence of his state and only as a prelude to it had entered into a stand-still agreement with the two nascent dominions. If the Maharaja was for independence of his state, why did the Sheikh as the top leader of National Conference oppose his intentional move? The only logical position would have been to lend him all out support and succour in putting his intentions into practice. The tenability of the argument gets established by the fact of Sheikh toying with the idea of independence soon after many miles on the highway to accession were traversed. Ram Chandra Kak as the Prime Minister of the ruler was taken for an agent provocateur of Pakistan[27]. If the Kashmirians for their own reasons were keen to get annexed to Pakistan, why did they lag behind in strengthening the hands of Mr. Kak, who as per them devotedly worked for the fulfilment of Pak-strategies in Kashmir? Instead, he was handcuffed, spat at and shown all disrespect and contumely by the Sheikh and the Muslims of Kashmir. The golden opportunity of vying with the ruler only to goad him to exercise his illegal options for declaring his state as independent of the two nascent dominions or annexing it to Pakistan as provided by the Act were practically wasted by the Sheikh and the Muslim masses of Kashmir.

The Muslim leaders of National Conference were actually caught

in the cleft of a stick when they were squarely confronted with the vexatious and thorny question of accession. Thwarting the Maharaja from exercising his legal options, Sheikh Abdullah yelled, "If four million people living in Jammu and Kashmir state were bypassed and the Maharaja declared accession to India or Pakistan, I will raise the banner of revolt and launch a do or die struggle."[28] If politics can be termed as a battle for capturing political power, the Sheikh desired the Maharaja to transfer the reins of government to him along with the onerous responsibility of deciding the question of accession.

The Working Committee of National Conference comprising predominantly the Muslims was sharply divided on the issue of accession. Fearing physical annihilation in Pakistan owing to his track record of anti-Jinnah and anti-Muslim Conference postures, the Sheikh motivated with the design of mending fences with the Muslim League leadership in Pakistan and also clearing the thick-set cobwebs of misunderstanding looming sky-high there in Pakistan political circles, despatched his two lieutenants, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad and Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq to Pakistan with the patent mission of conveying to M.A. Jinnah that the options for accession were all open. But to their utter dismay, the two emissaries of the Sheikh were totally cold-shouldered by the top- notch politicians of Pakistan. However, the message of Sheikh was conveyed when Bakshi and Sadiq held inconclusive discussions with Feroz Khan Noor, Mian Mamtaz Daulatna and Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar,[29] a second tier leadership of the Muslim League in Pakistan.

What the two comrades-in-arms of the Sheikh gathered in Pakistan was that the Muslim League leadership did not lend any credence to National Conference as the authentic voice of Kashmir and if at all it recognised any organisation, it was only Muslim Conference of Kashmir, which factually at that point of Kashmir politics was relegated to backwaters, though not totally extinct. As the new political developments were unfolding in quick succession, the two emissaries of the Sheikh having reached Srinagar post-haste, entering into serious confabulations with Muslim members of the National Conference Working Committee without taking the Hindu members into confidence mooted the idea of reviving the Muslim Conference with a view to arrive at a thorough understanding with the Pak-leadership on the moot issue of accession. The entire prospect of new developments ensuring from the stand-point of reviving the

Muslim Conference got snuffed out when the hordes of tribesmen launched an unprecedented invasion on the soil of Jammu and Kashmir with the sole objective of forcibly annexing the territory to Pakistan. The kaleidoscope of political change moved so swift and fast that what was quite unpredictable became predictable. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru took the blank cheque out of the left pocket of Mr. Jinnah and to his consternation signed it confidently for India. The die was cast and history was made with the State of Jammu and Kashmir as an integral part of India.

The wholesale aggression of the region of Kashmir and other adjoining territories proved calamitous for the peace-loving Hindus of Kashmir and other regions. Mahatma Gandhi saw a ray of hope in the skies of Kashmir, but there was much more to it than could be met by his eyes. Complexities of situation were to surface engulfing the Kashmirian Hindus in a vortex of loot, murder and arson. More than 26,000 Hindus including 15,000 Kashmirian Hindus and 3500 Sikhs became the target of the tribal invaders. The areas they inhabited were Poonch, Rajouri, Mirpur, Munawar, Bhimber, Kotli, Noushera, Muzaferabad, Uri, Baramullah, Sopore, Handawara, Kupwara, Bandipora, Pattan, Tangamarg, and Badgam. The tribals set fire to their thousands of houses, cow-sheds, shops and other standing structures. Hundreds of women and girls were kidnapped and their innocence violated. The property of the Hindus worth crores was looted and pillaged. Countless women committed suicide by taking poison or jumping into the Jehlum and Kishenganga rivers or deep wells.

During raids, the tribal invaders took many Hindus as prisoners subjecting them to untold torture. Capturing the police-posts and police-stations in all the territories under their avalanche, the raiders killed 390 policemen, who were all Hindus.[30] Numbers beyond record were mercilessly slaughtered and hundreds declared missing and untraceable. Sikhs were the main targets of the brutalities of the tribals as they have a track record of meeting and fighting Muslim repression and persecution. Their women-folk killed themselves by plunging into rivers in countless numbers. There were numberless cases of Sikhs putting their womenfolk and young budding girls to bullets only to save them from the ignominies of the Muslim tribals verging on barbarity.

The tribals in complicity with the local fanatics granted reprieve to the Hindus who got converted to the faith of Islam. The process

of conversion was an essential part of the whole storm of aggression ravaging the Hindus of Kashmir and other regions. The Hindu places of worship were destroyed wholehog. Even the mission edifice of St. Joseph's Convent was ravaged, ransacked and then put to flames. In their utter religious frenzy and fury, the tribals ruthlessly killed the Assistant Mother Superior, three nuns and a British officer's spouse.[31] The Mother and nuns had rendered invaluable services to the Muslim residents of the Baramullah district by providing them both medicare and education. In the Islamic fashion, the invaders were merciless to all and sundry falling outside the pale of Islam. A young patriot, Maqbool Sherwani, accused of aiding and shielding the infidels, was brutally butchered. He was fastened to a post in the midst of Baramulla town, nails driven into his body and finally bullets were pumped into him. His killing was a sheer barbarity. Eleven members of a Hindu family in Bandipore, Baramulla were ruthlessly slaughtered only to satiate their thirst for the blood of infidels *(kafirs)*.

After Baramulla was cleared of the barbarous tribals, as many as 1178 Hindu women and girls were recovered as had been kidnapped and kept in captivity [32]. Thousands were converted to Islam and married by the local Muslims. As per the report of the *New York Times,* three thousand townsmen including four Europeans, a retired British army officer and his pregnant wife were mercilessly massacred.[33]

The tribal invasion launched upon Jammu and Kashmir State resulted in the displacement of 26,000 people, who were only Hindus and Sikhs. Not exceeding 6000 of them were re-settled in the areas of Uri and Baramulla. Many refugees returned to their native towns and villages only to take to their normal daily chores.[34] They were not assisted by any government agency in the processes of re-settlement. Those refugees, who were provided with free rations in the city of Srinagar, did not exceed 3,600, mostly orphans, destitutes, disabled and widows.[35]

West Punjab engulfed in worst-even communal carnage got denuded of Hindu population leading to their influx in mighty waves into the region of Jammu. By 1949-50, 20,000 families of such refugees were registered out of which 1823 families comprising 9115 persons were rehabilitated[36]. The influx proved so mighty that Jammu soil harbours not fewer than 1.25 lack refugees, still hanging in balance. The refugees have yet to be politically rehabilitated by way of conferment of voting rights as guaranteed by the Constitution of India. The Muslim political leaders out to maintain their political hegemony have been opposing the conferment of political rights on

such refugees as have migrated from West Punjab. The rosy scenario drawn about the 1947 developments in the Valley of Kashmir was tinged murky. The tribal invasion unleashed in the name of Islam had all the ingredients of a crusade– loot, rape, murder, arson and conversion.

Without being dishonest to history, it is extremely pertinent to put that rest of the valley not marauded by the tribals, remained calm and peaceful. Sheikh Abdullah's role in this behalf was laudable as he raised a loud voice for communal peace and harmony. Despite the forces of sabotage, no discernible damage was inflicted on the seemingly monolith of varied communities welded together for the achievement of political and economic emancipation under a democratic dispensation. To mount vigilance, local militia was raised by recruiting zealous patriots of all hues entrusted with the paramount task of keeping the saboteurs at bay. A flash of spark had the potential of blowing up the entire monolith to bits of splinters. So slender was the thread.

Notes and References

1. J.L. Nehru, *Discovery of India, P267.*
2. Interview with Pandit Shyam Lal Saraf, a veteran freedom fighter of Kashmir, broadcast from All India Radio, Srinagar, Kashmir
3. *Hari Singh Papers.*
4. *Administrative Reports.* 1928-29-30-31-32.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. P.N. Bazaz, *Inside Kashmir.*
8. *Martand File.*
9. *Administrative Reports,* 1928-29-30-31-32
10. P.N.K. Bamzai, *History of Kashmir.*
11. Interview with Dr. Kartar Singh.
12. *Administrative Reports,* 1928-29-30-31.
13. *Administrative Reports,* 1928-29-30-31.
14. The Kashmirian Hindus had submitted a memorandum to Mahatma Gandhi regarding the Kalishree Temple dispute

in 1924.

15. The representation made to Maharaja Hari Singh by the Kashmirian Hindus through Dr. R.K. Bhan.
16. Dr. R.K. Bhan was the secretary of the Association for the Upliftment of the Kashmirian Hindus. It was he who had supplied the ruler with the data of matriculates, intermediates, graduates and post-graduates without jobs and employment. At the behest of the ruler, the representative of the Kashmirian Hindus collected the data of the Hindus employed in private sector and the same was supplied and furnished to him.
17. *Glancy Commission Report.*
18. *Ibid.*
19. Saxena, *Tragedy in Kashmir* pp 4-9.
20. *Administrative Reports* 1931-32-33.
21. It was a Mother Goddess Temple located at Narayan-Sthan, now known as Naraparistan.
22. Dr. N.N. Rina retired as Head of the Department of Physics from the University of Kashmir. His book on imperialist conspiracy in Kashmir has won a lot of applause. Others who owed allegiance to the Communist Party of Kashmir were P.N. Jalali, M.L. Misri, Brij Lal Koul, H.N. Durani, O.N. Trisal, P.N. Kachru and many others. All Hindu communists despite their glorious role were left in wilderness and languished in poverty.
23. *Aatish-e-Chinar* by Sheikh. Abdullah.
24. P.N. Bazaz, *Freedom Struggle in Kashmir,* P 180.
25. *Ibid.*
26. Dr. Iqbal's poem lamenting the lot of the Kashmirian Muslims who had been sold for few coins.
27. Sheikh Abdullah, *Aatish-e-Chinar.*
28. Sheikh's speech at Hazuri Bagh soon after he was released from jail by the Maharaja.
29. Sheikh Abdullah, *Aatish-e-Chinar.*
30. *Administrative Report,* 1948-49.
31. P.N.K. Bamzai, *History of Kashmir.*
32. *Ibid.*
33. *Administrative Report,* 1948-49.
34. P.N.K. Bamzai, *History of Kashmir.*
35. *Administrative Report,* 1949-50.
36. *Ibid,* 1950-51.

CHAPTER NINE

Post 1947 Scenario

Kashmir as an integral part of India was mak'ng 'tryst with destiny', but the post-1947 scenario of developments within the State hijacked the Kashmirian Hindus from sharing the tryst. The National Conference leaders of top-notch stature rooted in their age-old hatred and antipathy unto the Kashmirian Hindus concertedly devised and pursued a policy of fire and brimstone only to blast their citadel into an unrecognisable pile of ruins. A loud campaign emanating from the corridors of power that the Kashmirian Hindus had greener pastures available outside the purlieux of Kashmir proved ominous for their future prospects of peace, stability and security, thus turning turtle their apple-cart of hopes, visions and aspirations. The Kashmirian Hindus were virtually put on the hit list of the government, each dart issuing from its armoury, targeting, injuring and maiming them. Justice for them had the back-seat. They were not even heard though that was their basic right. Open hostility unto them unleashed by men in corridors of power was sufficient enough to convince them that they had no future in their land of genesis, which they revered and loved as a splendorous manifestation of Shiva only.

Sheikh Abdullah's utterances apropos the Kashmirian Hindus that they in his Islamic ghetto as envisioned by the top Sayyids would be reduced to hewers of wood and drawers of water served as guidelines for weakening them politically by trampling upon their right of electing and getting elected and crippling them economically by an open policy of discrimination in matters of employment, admissions to various study programmes and general planning policy for their over-all upliftment, thus hounding them out for extinction, thrown away from their roots. Mirza Afzal Beg as the campaign-manager of this treacherous game set the tone and tenor for the storm that had to gather for the Kashmirian Hindus obliging them to go in trickles across the Bannihal tunnel in search of a mere pittance. As per a report in the *Hindustan Times*, 8000 Kashmirian

Hindus had migrated from their ancestral land to various parts of the country by the end of 1955.[1]

Debt Conciliation Boards

The Government of Sheikh Abdullah committed to relieve the peasantry of the crushing burden of debts declared moratorium on debts incurred by peasants and constituted Debt Conciliation Boards for the purpose. It was a radical measure beyond any shadow of doubt, hailed by all sections of the Kashmirian populace. The old accumulated debts, scaled down from 11.1 million to 2.4 million rupees, provided sufficient relief to the Muslim peasantry.[2] Though the Kashmirian Muslims were hit the most, yet it was loudly trumpeted that the Kashmirian Hindus were the oppressors of the peasants, who had incurred debts from them only at exorbitant rates. The Muslim *wad-dars* (Bakals), despite religious injunctions, pursued the profession of lending money to their co-religionists at unimaginable rates of interest and were the real oppressors. The Hindu intellectuals of sound and healthy approach to the problem of giving relief to the Muslim peasantry from bone-breaking burdens of accumulated debts were the main architects of the entire scheme with all its modalities. Late Damodar Bhat, a wellknown lawyer practising at Badagam and Srinagar bars, played a key-role in devising and effectively implementing the measure designed for the economic revival of the peasantry with its far-reaching impact on the establishment of a just and rational society at large. Pandit Rishi Dev was a key member on the Central Debt Conciliation Board.

But, the Boards set up to dispose of cases under provisions of law led to the creation of lots of misgivings in the miniscule minority of Hindus, who got the feel that the manner the Boards dispensed justice smacked of utmost prejudice and communalism. Most of the Boards proved hostile and partial. In cases where debtors confessed of having incurred debts and were supported by genuine documents, the Boards decreed for the re-payment of debts in appallingly low instalments dismaying the bankers for having lost even their principal sums. The communal tilt manifested by the Debt Conciliation Boards worked havoc with the minority psyche. Despite it, the Kashmirian Hindus accepted it and the Muslims exhibited their utmost animosity and opposition to the measure, which had hit some politically powerful families connected with the Sheikh and the National Conference.

Land Reforms

The fact remains that the National Conference leadership could not back-track from its commitment to relieving the peasantry from the moribund system of feudalism. Land reforms were a must and a significant component of a wider socio-economic programme of reconstruction and regeneration. In the blue-print of 'New Kashmir', the land reforms were envisaged as a key to freeing the peasantry from the thraldom of feudalism acting as an obstacle in their onward march to freedom from exploitation and abject poverty. Designed to create a support-base in the Muslim peasantry of Kashmir, the National Conference leadership slyly presented the Hindus as the only section possessing enormous landed property, which was many leagues away from truth. In the province of Kashmir, if there were some Hindu landlords, there were equally Muslim landlords who were more ruthless in their treatment of the Muslim tenants, ever tightening their noose on them only to reduce them to abysmal depths of want and deprivation. The Muslim cruelty heaped on the Muslim tenants was never highlighted by the National Conference leaders, who stoutly opposed the Kisan Sabha organised by Late Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz under the leadership of Abdul Salam Yatu.[3] Reasons for this might have been political, but the fact remains that the Radical Humanists working under the over-all guidance and leadership of Shree Bazaz were the first to focus on the problems confronting the Muslim peasantry of Kashmir. The Muslim leadership of the National Conference aroused hatred against the Kashmirian Hindus, who, as per them, were the oppressors of the Muslims. It never focussed on the extraordinary precedent set by Pandit Jia Lal Tamiri,[4] a top freedom fighter known for his proverbial honesty and Pandit Durga Prashad Dhar,[5] a central minister, who had given their ancestral lands to their tenants much before land reforms were enacted and implemented in the State. Have the Muslims of Kashmir to offer such a unique example standing comparison to the one set by two bright sons of the Kashmirian Hindu community?

The National Conference leaders only to capitalise on the hatred and ill-will that the Muslims of Kashmir harboured against the Kashmirian Hindus made frequent references to Bala Kak Dhar and Shyam Sunder Lal Dhar as oppressors of the Muslims, but they never referred to Ahmad Mir and Musmat Ashraf Begum, [6] two big

land-owners of Kashmir, in the same contemptuous and derisive terms highlighting their oppression and cruelty unto the Muslim tenants. It will be pertinent to put that the National Conference as a political organisaton, despite its radical programme, was essentially rooted in medieval thought structure lending sanctity to all hues of Muslims, no matter what their position and status in economic relations were. 'Hail a person, if he is a Muslim and hate a person, if he is a Hindu' has been the watch-word of the National Conference politics.

The Government, true to its commitment, appointed a Land Reforms Committee in April, 1948 with the patent mandate of drafting a plan for the abolition of big landed estates and transfer of land to the tiller. The ruling clique representing different political and economic interests got entangled in the ceiling tussle with Mirza Afzal Beg and Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq opting for a lower ceiling and non-payment of compensation for the lands wrested from the land-lords. But, before the Land Reforms Committee, working under various pulls and pressures, would formulate a plan for land reforms and the same would be enacted as law, Sheikh Abdullah from the forum of National Conference divulged the entire scheme resulting in the defeat of the spirit motivating the saidreforms.[7]

The Muslim landlords having come to learn that they had to surrender their landed estates exceeding 182 *Kanals* fixed as the standard ceiling entered into quick negotiations with their Muslim tenants for sharing the surplus land. In the process, religious ties and sentiments were exploited and the revenue hierarchy abetted the subversion of the entire scheme of land reforms conceived as a radical measure to boost up the lot of the Muslim peasantry in Kashmir. Critics of Sheikh Abdullah attribute it to his deliberate attempt to save the Muslim landlords from the thrust of the reforms. The end-product was that the Hindus of Kashmir especially those holding not much too big tracts of land were deprived of their large chunks of land without compensation. Because of religious differences, the Hindu landlords were at a definite disadvantage.

Big Landed Estates Abolition Act, 1952, did not prove of great benefit to the peasants, who were really landless.[8] Instead it led to the creation of a new class of Muslim landlords, who as tenants had their own tracts of land, and were allotted large tracts from the surplus land acquired by government from the landlords by virtue of the Act.[9] The Act was not scientifically conceived and drafted, as all available models worked out in America and the Soviet Union

based on huge proprietory farms and co-operative and collective farms with no private ownership were neither cognised nor thoroughly studied. Even the Brazilian models and the Chinese experiment stressing the stakes of the farmers in the farm-land on a permanent basis were also simply ignored. The National Conference leadership got the reforms implemented through the bureaucratic machine ignoring the suggestion by the radicals that they be implemented by the peasant committees.[10]

"What appeared highly irrational was that the ceiling was fixed in relation to an individual, as a unit of cultivation and not a family. This meant allowing to a family as many times the amount of ceiling land as the number of sons in a family and their father. They could possess as many times the portions of exempted land also. It could mean that a family could own a big landed estate",[11] records D. N. Dhar. The fact remains that the loop was not there by mistake but it was not plugged with the deliberate intention of providing an opportunity and escape route to the Muslims to distribute the surplus land among the sons and relations of the family only to save them from the scissors of the Act.

The Big Landed Estates Abolition Act did not touch *Bedzars, Safedzars, Kahikrisham* and orchards and could be possessed beyond any limit. This sly measure of keeping such lands beyond the purview of the Act was resorted to only to safeguard the Muslim interests and was a pointer to the growing political and economic power of the orchardist lobby within the government. Records D. N. Dhar, "What made things worse was that a tiller, after the land reform, had assumed two capacities, one as an owner and the other as a tenant. As owner he could possess the land within the ceiling limit and as tenant, he could hold as much as he wished because no ceiling was fixed for the tiller as tenant."[12]

Despite many perceptible flaws and sectarian tilt, the Big Estates Abolition Act did not by and large erode the rural base of the Kashmirian Hindus, who grumbled, yet took it in a stride and their intellectuals characterising it as a necessary measure to rejuvenate the entire economic structure leading to the prosperity of the rural masses. The saidAct evoked the worst-ever reaction from the Muslim landlords of Kashmir in definite laison with the landlords hailing from the region of Jammu. The rich peasants aligning with the National Conference sharply reacted against the measure and there

was a revolt against the leadership only to be quelled by showering of many more concessions on them.

The Agrarian Reforms Act of 1972 and the Agrarian Reforms Act of 1976 drafted and enacted during the regimes headed by G. M. Sadiq and Mir Qasim (Congress) and Sheikh Abdullah (National Conference) offer the following features :

(a) All the apple-Sheikhs and saffron-sharks are beyond the purview of the Acts.

(b) The compensation as per the schedule II, Part A of the Act, 1972 varies from Rs. 7.50 to Rs. 500/- per *kanal.* It is not at the market rates of land ranging from 10,000 to 5 lac per *kanal.*

(c) Compensation paid for acquiring a portion of land in the public interest is not to benefit the owner, but the tenant, who is a Muslim.

(d) The Hindu widows, orphans, blind and disabled depending solely on land are left in wilderness, unprotected and uncared for, languishing in utter poverty.

(e) The Hindus under the provisions of the Acts could resume land for tilling, but were never alloweded to resume land by issuance of decrees upon decrees, blocking all possibilities for such resumption. As 90% applicants for resumption are Hindus, the government has simply ignored them.

(f) The revenue records of the Kashmirian Hindus have been grossly tampered with and erased with the result their cases eat dust and have never been settled.

(g) The levy collected from the 'prospective tenants' for the 'prospective owners' by way of compensation stands mis-appropriated by the revenue officials, mostly Muslims.

(h) The interests of MLAs, MPs, IAS officers, secretaries (under, deputy and additional) to government departments, judges, *Tehsildars* and other political and economic heavy-weights, all Muslims, owning huge tracts of land stand well protected by manipulating and tampering the records.

(i) As per the stipulations of the Big Landed Estates Abolition Act, the land-owners deprived of their landed property had to be provided employment at least to one member

of their families, but in case of the Kashmirian Hindus, it was simply ignored.

There are instances galore pinpointing the unscientific character and sheer worthlessness of the entire exercise of land reforms.

(a) A Hindu land-owner is a petty pensioner, whose land goes to a Muslim millionaire.

(b) Land belonging to a Hindu widow with no other means of sustenance is transferred to an apple-Sheikh.

(c) A Hindu land-owner is a petty school teacher whose land is grabbed only to be transferred to a Muslim gazetted officer holding enormous assets.

(d) The lands belonging to the (Hindu) deaf and dumb, mentally retarded and disabled with nothing to fall back upon are snatched and transferred to apple-Sheikhs and businessmen rolling in wealth and riches unlimited.

(e) The tenants benefitted under the Acts have emerged as the *Kulaks* at the site of land[13] never tilling their huge tracts of land, but hiring the Bihari labourers on payment of Rs. 30/- per day and two square meals a day.

(f) The Muslims emboldened by the government patronage chopped off the orchards of the Hindus and the Sikhs only to show the lands under their tenancy and the revenue hierarchy legalising the whole brutality by registering mutations in the names of the plunderers.

(g) As the orchards have been placed beyond the purview of the ceiling limits, the cultivators taking law into their own hands and the Muslim authorities conniving at transforming the agricultural lands into orchards. This practice has been resorted to on a large scale, initially started by the politically influential and affluent sections of the Muslim peasantry.

(h) Even a petty land-holder among the Hindus was not spared from the thrust of the land reforms.

Be it said that the land reforms enacted with vengefulness motivated by the utmost prejudice against the Kashmirian Hindus sticking to their faith completely eroded their rural base, reducing them to the status of aliens in their own environs and pushing them out of the rural scenario, which they were accused of polluting by chanting a *mantra*, tolling a bell, blowing a conch and tending a temple or a shrine. At village level the reforms generated a fury of

hatred and a storm of religious strife resulting in the harassment and intimidation of the Hindus ever in tight-straits. 'Occupy the lands of the Kashmirian Hindus' was the clarioncall of the top leaders of National Conference to the peasants, who took law into their own hands, beat, abused and heaped all manner of humiliation on them and the government machinery especially law-enforcing and revenue agencies aiding the whole process of loot, plunder and forcible occupation. Depriving them of sustenance by snatching away small holdings of land, the Kashmirian Hindus had two options, either to march out or get converted to Islam only to win sympathies for a relief from the Islamised bureaucracy. The Kashmirian Hindus being a fragile minority with no weapons to wield could not retaliate in the same manner as men of other communities wielding weapons retaliated by shooting dead the tenants trying to forcibly occupy their ancestral lands. It is worth to be recorded that the Hindu landlords though very few in number, were highly compassionate and considerate to their Muslim tenants and no assiduous probing of records can establish a single case where a Kashmirian Hindu landlord might have tortured or slaughtered his tenants while feudal history elsewhere is bristling with such horrendous examples.

The land reforms proved practically a war waged on the Kashmirian Hindus and the war was not finished in one swoop. In fact, it was planned phase-wise. The big landed estates were abolished in 1952 and whatsever small holdings were left in the possession of the Hindus were grabbed in 1972 and 1976. With the sole design of exerting sustained pressure on them, adding to their insecurity and instability and fear psychosis and finally leading to their exodus or liquidation, thus finishing the incomplete pogrom of extirpating and decimating infidelity (*kufur*) from the land of Kashmir.

Could it be asked why the applications from the Kashmirian Hindus for resumption of land provided under the Acts have been put under the carpet ? Is it because the applicants are mostly Hindus? Why have decrees upon decrees been issued, one contradicting the other, for throttling the processes of resumption?

Is it because the Hindus as a matter of state policy are not to be allowed to resume land? Why have not the orchards and saffron fields stretching over miles been put to the sharp scissors of land reforms acts? Is it because they are owned by apple-Sheikhs and saffron-sharks?

The Central Government under the hegemony of Pandit Jawahar

Lal Nehru went on watching passively how death and destruction was being wrought on the Kashmirian Hindus. It could have intervened if not by stopping the entire drama of destruction, but by the issuance of specific guide-lines founded on sound expertise to the Government of Jammu and Kashmir. Even the Planning Commission could have been commissioned for drafting a fool-proof reforms programme in an impartial manner. The state government acted hastily only to transfer land from one set of people to the other ensuring the economic precedence of the Muslims over other ethnic groups which led to ominous developments destabilising the entire state.

II

Bereft of small holdings of land with no hopeful prospects of rehabilitation, the Kashmirian Hindus as hapless victims to a tyrannical order devising each measure for their utter ruination were driven to the wall and in their sheer frustration and despair repaired to various parts of the country in quest of a meagre living. That they were migrating for greener pastures is a sheer myth manufactured by politicians like Saif-ud-din Soz, come from nowhere, only to smoke -screen the unjust and inequitous treatment meted out to them by the Muslim rulers masquerading as nationalists and Congressites. Without undertaking an indepth and detailed analysis of their problems with clinical precision, the Central Government in its sheer callousness issued directions to various central departments not to recruit the migrating Kashmirian Hindus.[14]

Despite it, the trickle of exodus went on unabated attracting the attention of men in corridors of power in the central capital. It is generally believed that the Central Government took strong exception to the harassment and intimidation of the Kashmirian Hindus. Minding signals from the Centre, Sheikh Abdullah chose to attend a function at Sheetalnath, Srinagar organised to celebrate Lord Krishna's birth anniversary. Only as an eyewash, he had an inter-action with the leadership of the Hindu community, who articulated their views on the entire gamut of issues that had cropped up for the community in the wake of post-1947 political and economic developments. The Sheikh promised redressal of their problems and grievances, but the government of the day communally tilted continued with its policy

of hammer and tongs against the Hindus designed to eliminate them from all walks of life.

The Hindus forming 2 percent minority in Kashmir were totally ignored by the state government out to appease the Muslims and also by the Central Government out to ingratiate itself with the Muslims. The minority of Kashmir has never been a mute minority. It has effectively highlighted its vital problems with the Central and state governments apropos economic distress, blatant discrimination on communal grounds and encroachment on religious places finally leading to their forcible occupation. The state government of any complexion openly espoused the Muslim cause, protecting Muslim interests by legislation and manipulation, not caring two hoots for the secular ideals, democratic values and constitutional tenets safe-guarding rights of all, no matter what faith and religion they harboured. The apathy and neglect exhibited by the central leaders unto the Hindu minority of Kashmir have been both amazing and mind-boggling. Aware of the captive state of the Hindu minority, they never thought of their survival against the massive onslaught of the Muslim majority communalism, which is highly aggressive and frenzied. Any attempt in the direction of eliminating the Kashmirian Hindus was a pointer to the establishment of an Islamic state in Kashmir replete with the potential of blasting the entire Indian edifice put on the pedestal of secularism, tolerance and co-existence.

In the domain of politics, many miles on the high-way of accession to India were traversed. Documents were signed and history was made. But, in the wake of it, the political mind of Sheikh Abdullah suffered a quick reversal and the issues, which were practically shelved, got opened up giving currency to 'plebiscite' and 'independent Kashmir' with their mesmeric impact on the mass mind. The new options being pleaded and propagated by the Sheikh had less of political cogency and more of personal ego impelling him to invite a head-on clash with the central power. His visions of maintaining Kashmir as his personal fiefdom got revived and his yellings against the very leaders, who had firmly propped him up in his struggle against an autocratic ruler, proved disastrous. There were many vigorous minds, who sensed his illusions of keeping Kashmir away from the mainstream and by spilling blood and suffering martyrdom, they blasted the separatist barrier of 'Permit System', thus bringing the State of Jammu and Kashmir closer to India to share the currents and cross-currents of mainstream life. The Sheikh

had no firm convictions and was given to double talk and duplicity. He objectively carried the Kashmirian Muslims to India, but fortified them against the currents and cross-currents of Indian life with all what it means.

In the back-drop of ominous political developments, the role of the Kashmirian Hindus became suspect. With their profound commitment to the forces of unity and integrity of India, they could not support a wayward thesis of independence or plebiscite, actually serving as a facade for pro-Pak forces to close up their ranks for achieving the objective of annexing Kashmir to Pakistan, which had not abandoned its policy of interference and subversion in Kashmir. Threats subduing the Hindus were openly doled out. Even surveillance was mounted on them. A close watch was mounted on the Hindu officers in the Department of Police. The activities of the Hindu leaders already a part of the governmental machine were monitored. Scandals of theft and corruption were hurled at them only to tarnish their image and lower their stock in the public eye.[15] The Kashmirian Hindus irrespective of their station and status in life were openly branded as the spies of India. As per the fiat of a top Muslim theologian responsible for the genocide of the Kashmirian Hindus, no Hindu could operate as a spy in the Muslim land, which Kashmir was by and by emerging as ethnic cleansing and economic and political strangulation of the minorities had been consistently and unflinchingly resorted to. The process of suspecting the bonafides of the Hindus finally touched its culmination when Sheikh Abdullah dubbed them as 'fifth column' with their gaze set at the Central Capital[16] and not joining the mainstream politics of Kashmir, which had discernible currents of separatism, secessionism and communal hatred.

It is pertinent to put that the accusations levelled against the Kashmirian Hindus and also against the tall sons of the country form a part of the Sheikh's auto-biography, *Aatish-e-Chinar*, alleged to have been written by a ghost writer. The said-book earning recognition from the Sahitya Academy virtually put the seal of approval on all the irrelevant and spurious observations littered over the book.

The Sheikh's remarks never posed him in brighter colours, but exposed his secular credentials, which were always infirm. The ranks of communalists openly maligning the Kashmirian Hindus as the spies of India had already set a trend and the Sheikh did not deem it fit to counter it even half-heartedly. Instead, without offering

resistance, he set his boat in the same direction. As things were shaping, the Hindus were deemed to have outlived their utility unto the Muslim cause. The end-product of the Sheikh's utterances in the book was that a wave of unprecedented hatred against the Kashmirian Hindus got generated, their bonafides became suspect, their relations with the Muslim neighbours suffered a sudden break and cumulatively the Muslim rationalily developed a vertical crack.

The Sheikh had thrown ample indications that he was a part of the whole campaign for Islamisation of Kashmir. After 1975 takeover he is said to have gone to the extent of addressing the Muslim officers in the secretariat exhorting them to weed out all traces of the Hindus in the power structure, though the Islamised bureaucracy had already completed the task. In tune with the local Muslim officialdom, the Sheikh pursued the policy of side-lining and detracting the outsiders belonging to the IPS and IAS cadres, taking and treating them as unwanted elements being thrust on Kashmir by a colonial power.

The Muslim communalists operating under the cover of the Sheikh's calumny and slander against the Kashmirian Hindus found a fertile ground for the Muslim mobilisation for subversion, secessionism and Hindu-baiting. Since the dawn of independence, systematic efforts were made to liquidate the patriotic and peace-loving community of the Hindus. It was done under the garb of secular facade and national reconstruction. The Hindus everywhere whether in street, educational institutions or government offices were subjected to all manner of harassment and intimidation. Not only that they were reviled and a barrage of provocative invective let loose on them but what the campaign managers under the state patronage meant to achieve was polarisation of the two communities on religious grounds with all communication channels cut off or dried up.

The Kashmirian Hindus known for their patience and tough fibre pocketed all the insults hurled on them and patiently bore the humiliation they were subjected to. Normally such situations have led to an out-break of communal violence in various parts of the country. The majoritarian communalism generated and perpetuated by the powers that be in connivance with the vicious communal forces operating at every level in Kashmir was directed to single-point objective of silencing, sidelining and finally liquidating the Kashmirian minority of the Hindus, who are soft, sophisticated and highly educated. From Sheikh Abdullah, Mirza Afzal Beg, G. M. Sadiq and Mir Qasim all down the line, everyone in the governmental

apparatus and political frame worked with single-minded concentration to weed out the Kashmirian Hindus, who were projected as the spies of India operating on the soil of Kashmir. What had angered Sheikh Abdullah most was that the Kashmirian Hindus did not stand by him when he was deposed in 1953 for having fallen into the dragnet of a conspiracy of outside origin. Instead the Hindus had the cheek to oppose his somersaults in politics and also keep away from the politics of Plebiscite Front operating with his blessings.

Following the foot-prints of that great tormentor of the Kashmirian Hindus, Sikandar, the iconoclast, Sheikh did not fight shy of repeating his decree, 'get converted or flee or get perished'. In fact, the blue-print for Islamisation of Kashmir was laid down by him only and all others succeeding him as the helmsmen of Kashmir pursued the same policy of tightening the noose on the Hindus till they got strangulated and snuffed out. All government fiats, legislations and directives were the missives hurled on them only to put them in strait jackets. All norms were violated, new norms smacked of blatant communalism and, in fact, governments of any political persuasion resorted to the norm of violating all norms only to favour and foster the Muslim interests.

Quantity, mediocrity and academic poverty gained precedence over quality, brilliance and academic richness. Only to benefit the Kashmirian Muslims all constitutional guarantees were thrown to the winds and ruthlessly subverted. The Hindus, the Sikhs and the Buddhists of Laddakh were totally ignored in matters of recruitment, educational programmes and allotment of financial resources for developmental activities. In contravention of the constitutional tenets, the Muslims of the Valley were as a matter of state policy declared as backward and the Kashmirian Hindus as a creamy layer. Highly astounding was the categorisation of the posh Muslim localities inhabited by the corrupt engineers, fraudulent businessmen, drug peddlars and highly affluent people as the backward pockets and stinking slum areas inhabited by the Kashmirian Hindus as the posh and affluent localities. Fraudulent manipulation, irrational measures, communally motivated directives and partisan considerations were resorted to as devices to boost up the Muslim interests at the cost of other population segments estabishing their hegemony over the politico- economic fabric of the state. Communal representation on the basis of population was the standard policy

devised to regulate recruitment in services, admissions in colleges and other training institutions.

The economic devastation of the Kashmirian Hindus coupled with an onslaught on their right to live resulted in consigning them to the backwaters of the Kashmirian scenario. But, the Kashmirian Hindus never reconciled to the status of third degree citizens assigned to them by the Muslim rulers. They took their battle against the rulers to the constitutional and legal fora set up for the purpose under law. What has come their way is the feeling that the institutions established in the country have lost their strength and vitality and have failed the people of the country. The entire pyramid of courts dispensing justice has grown obese and inflexible with no muscles to meet the relevant requirements of a nation developing new dynamics. The judicial processes involving cases of economic deprivation, restoration of justiciable rights and encroachments on the religious properties of the Kashmirian Hindus have been dilatory and time-consuming. In most of the cases the executive has shown scant respect for the court judgments and strained every nerve to subvert them reducing them almost to nullity.

Notes and References

1. P. N. Bazaz, *Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir.*
2. *Ibid.*
3. Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz, *Inside Kashmir.*
4. 'Ahmad Mir owned 4,202 *Kanals* of land and Musmat Ashraf Begum owned 3, 915 *Kanals.*' D. N. Dhar, *Socio-Economic History of Kashmir Peasantry.*
5. P. N. K. Bamzai, *History of Kashmir.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*
9. Interview with P. N. Jalali, veteran freedom fighter.
10. D. N. Dhar, *Socio-Economic History of Kashmir Peasantry*
11. *Ibid.*
12. King C. Bharti. "Land Reforms – A Hoax", *Daily Excelsior*, Jammu.

13. D. N. Dhar, *Socio-Economic History of Kashmir Peasantry.*
14. The said-order though inoperative, has not been formally withdrawn even now.
15. Pt. Shyam Lal Saraf, a veteran freedom fighter, was indirectly accused of having stolen a clock from his office chambers.
16. Sheikh Abdullah, *Aatish-e-Chinar.* Be it said that the Muslim leaders of National Conference are said to have looted all the guest-houses of the Maharaja Hari Singh and denuded them of precious carpets and even nuts and bolts of Persian make. A particular Chief Minister never cooked food at his residence and all items of food would be supplied to him by the Department of Tawaza. (hospitality)

CHAPTER TEN

Jammu and Ladakh Colonies of Muslim Kashmir

As has been amply demonstrated, in the col of history, the Kashmirian Hindus have been victims to persecution and torture on religious grounds. That the Muslims have been their tormentors is amply proved by the historical evidence. For them, the post - 1947 era failed to usher in a period of peace and stability as the communally motivated governments of the state hammered them out of the economic compass and deprived them of all constitutional rights and guarantees. The Muslim hierarchy wielding absolute power unabashedly has been espousing the Muslim interests, protecting them every inch, siphoning off the major portion of the resources, leaving all the minorities of the Hindus, the Sikhs and the Buddhists high and dry, poor and absolutely deprived.

In democratic dispensations, it is the minorities of all hues that are to be safeguarded and protected lest their democratic rights and privileges should be trampled upon. It is how such systems have evolved channels ensuring the participation of minorities in the overall functioning of their systems. But what has been the Islamic method in Kashmir is to choke and stifle the Hindus and ensure all safeguards and protections for the entire community of the Muslims in Kashmir. That the Muslim majority of Kashmir has been living a posh-style of life is the result of siphoning off and cornering the entire economic and political cake. Yet they are instinctively given to grumbling, holding firmly fast to the exhortation of Mirza Afzal Beg, rank communalist and sly lieutenant of Sheikh Abdullah – 'Muslims, come in hordes, eat all you get and go on grumbling' – *Walivo, Khyavo ta Barav Deevo.*

The Hindus of Jammu have been subjected to the similar unfair treatment. The Kashmirian brand of Muslims abhorrent of the sections of population not subscribing to the faith of Islam have trampled

upon their rights, privileges and constitutional guarantees perpetuating their backwardness by administering law, by making law and by resorting to frauds and manipulations. What is objectively perceptible is that Jammu comes nowhere to match the development graph of Kashmir, lagging behind in all spheres and sectors of development. The step-motherly treatment of Jammu is communally motivated as the Islamised bureaucracy has been manipulating the diversion of the development funds to the Muslim Kashmir resulting in an unprecedented boom in the economy of Kashmir benefiting the Muslims alone. It is wellknown that Kashmir has registered an exemplary advance in the sectors of agriculture, horticulture, tourism, handicrafts, and more than most in the domain of education.

The opinion leaders in the region of Jammu have been long clamouring and highlighting the demand for declaring Jammu as a separate autonomous region only to ensure the development of the province in varied fields of economy. They of whatever political hue are unanimous that the unjust and tyrannical governance dominated by the Muslim chauvinists has been responsible for and instrumental to their poverty and economic backwardness. The Gajendragadker and Sikri commissions constituted by the governments of Jammu and Kashmir have upheld the contention of the Jammuites that the Muslim rulers have deprived them of the basic infrastructure of development and more than most of the institutions for manpower development. Sheikh Abdullah also chose Kashmir as the site for the construction of the Institute of Medical Sciences with the funds from Government of India. The Jammuites have been crying hoarse and justifiably so for an Engineering College, Agriculture College, Institute of Medical Sciences, Agriculture University, roads and communication links and allotment of due share of development funds with a view to achieving parity with the province of Kashmir snatching away lion's share of development money. The immediate scrapping of the communal rationale for development as devised by the Islamised bureaucracy of Kashmir is on the agenda of all opinion leaders hailing from the regions of Jammu, Ladakh and minorities of Kashmir.

The fate of the Buddhists of Ladakh has been even worse off. The Muslim tormentors have been exploiting them ruthlessly depriving them of all opportunities for progress and development. The key positions are held by the Kashmirian Muslims, who are and have been subjecting them to loot and plunder. Basking in the sun of state patronage, the Muslims launched upon conversion campaigns

resulting in an open revolt by the valiant Buddhists. The two communities of the Buddhists and the Muslims otherwise lived in peace and amity. Ultimately the 'Reformation Campaign' was said to have been led by Pir Ghias-ud-din and Noor Mohammad, two ministers in the Sadiq Cabinet, who are said to have sown the seeds of religious discord leading to the absolute segregation of the two communities in the province of Ladakh. The DIG of Kashmir, Pir Ghulam Hasan Shah, had also a contributory role to play in polarising the two communities leading to the de-stabilization of the entire region.

The Muslims enjoying state patronage and protection and flaunting power and pelf have been ruling over the Buddhists like sovereigns out to trample upon their sense of pride and honour. Deeply hurt, the non-violent Buddhists are left with no other option but to launch upon a vigorous agitation for the ouster of the Kashmirian Muslims, who have been oppressing them and rejecting them as non-entities. What has offended the Buddhists most is that the Muslims have been denuding the *gompas* of priceless artifacts and consistently working for their conversion. The Christians also do not lag behind in conversion campaigns, but stand rebuffed by the stiff resistance from the simple and un-sophisticated Buddhists.

The Buddhists have understood the game-plan of the Islamised bureaucracy of Kashmir. To shrink their sway over the entire region, the Muslim rulers bifurcated the region into Ladakh and Kargil, one dominated by the Buddhists and the other by the Shia Muslims though they belong to the same stock. The Buddhists have been demanding an autonomous hill development council only to break loose from the Muslim tyranny. During the 'Quit Ladakh' movement, the Buddhists bared their non-violent teeth leading to the flight of Muslim tormentors from the frontiers of Ladakh along with all who shared the booty of loot and plunder only to find shelter under the protective wings of the Islamised bureaucracy ensuring their pays, allowances and other modes of relief.

The Kashmirian Muslims gnashed their teeth in utter wrath that the knave Buddhists of Ladakh had the courage and guts to touch the Kashmiri Muslims serving the cause of Islam on the soil of Ladakh. They were out to wreak vengeance on them and were lying in wait for an opportune moment. One evening, finding a group of Ladakhis moving about in the premises of the Tourist Reception Centre, Srinagar, a crowd of Muslim lumpens ran in their direction

in all fury only to manhandle them and inflict hurt on them. Sensing the peril, the Ladakhis immediately dropped their trousers and flaunted their genitals only to establish their credentials. After due verification of their Muslim identity, the Ladakhis were let off. To the dismay of Muslim lumpens, the Ladakhis turned out to be the Muslims, not the Buddhists, who were to be fleeced and lynched for their anti-Muslim agitation.

The Islamised state apparatus has been concertedly at work to contrive a rationale giving sanctity to the entire frame-work of political and economic preponderance over Jammu and Ladakh and also silence the fragile minority of the Kashmirian Hindus clamouring against violation of their normal human rights. If thoroughly perused, all the measures touching multifarious departments of life contrived since 1947 smack of blatant communalism and discrimination. Jammu and Ladakh as two components of the State of Jammu and Kashmir have been virtual colonies of the Kashmirian Muslims, who have created yawning chasms between various religious groups only to perpetuate their hegemonic position. The Buddhists have been pitted against the Shia-Muslims, the Muslims against the Kashmirian Hindus and the Muslims of Doda against the Hindus of the mountainous region. As the faithful executors of the ISI plan of Greater Kashmir, the Islamised bureaucracy enjoying the political patronage of the rulers that be injected the baneful virus of communalism designed to weld and fortify the Muslims of various regions into a bond of Islamic fraternity for achieving political ends formulated and projected by the combine of the local .bureaucracy and the outside mentors.

That the Muslims of the Valley are to be benefited and have to be pushed ahead at the expense of other ethnic groups has been the rationale devised by the Muslim rulers and the Islamised bureaucracy. Distortion of facts, manipulation of records, tampering with records, concoction of data, destruction of records, shady seniority lists, supersessions, relaxation of all rules and norms for Muslims, two seniority lists, one for the Muslims and the other for the Kashmirian Hindus have been the rationale in vogue in Kashmir, an integral part of a secular democracy. That the entire population of the Muslims in the Valley is backward, poor and deprived has been the rationale. All Muslims, one and all, from Sheikh Abdullah to a boatman, from Mir Qasim to a butcher are poor, bereft and hence need be pushed ahead over the heads of others, who are the Hindus, the Buddhists

and the Sikhs and as per the rationale are rich, prosperous and hence curbs are to be applied to their onward march.

At a glance, the rationale appears to be lop-sided, communal and sectarian and it has been in vogue since 1947. It was under the facade of the same rationale that small holdings of land owned by the Kashmirian Hindus were grabbed and orchards spreading over miles owned by the Muslim tycoons left untouched and intact. The same rationale Islamised the whole bureaucracy in Kashmir leaving others down and out and it has worked wonders for the Muslims adding to their prosperity levels, posh life-style, superfluous wealth and incomparable affluence. Yet there are men like Saif-ud-Din Soz and Ghulam Nabi Azad, who shed tears that the Kashmirian Muslims are terribly poor, wallowing in dust and dirt and living on alms.

To perpetuate their dominance in legislative bodies and executive machinery, the Kashmirian Muslim rulers without a pang of conscience resorted to the measure of manipulating the population figures of various ethnic groups. The Muslim population figures of the Valley were inflated beyond the credible limits only to maintain their political hegemony over the entire state and also to justify the near-total grab of the financial resources for the Muslim Kashmir. The Muslim rulers got a shock of their life when the population figures of the region of Jammu registered a steep rise and the government tried its best to suppress the census figures, but could not when a powerful voice against the suppression of such figures was raised. The Muslims undoubtedly are in dominant numbers in the Valley. But the attempt of the Muslim rulers has been to establish the declining growth rate of the Kashmirian Hindus, thus proclaiming to the world that they, just a 2 percent minority, have grabbed everything only to justify their onslaught on them by way of blocking their entry into various service slots and other professional institutions.

The census figures collected by the state administration are revealing only to establish a case of 'population manipulation', a deliberate attempt at showing population figures of the Kashmirian Hindus suffering a steep slide.

Population of the Kashmirian Hindus as Recorded By Census Department

			Decimal growth rate
1931	63, 088 (K.Ps of J&K together)		
1941	78,868	Increase during 1931-41 15,780	25%
Census could not be conducted in the year 1951.			
1961	63,000 (In Kashmir & Ladakh only, excluding Jammu Province)		
1971	1,16,000	+53, 000	84.1%
1981	1,27,000	+11,000	9.4%
1991	1,65,000 (projected)	+38,000	29.9%

Over-all growth rate in the entire state as per census records has been :

1961-71	29.60%
1971-81	28.97%
1981-91	30.00%

Frauds by Census Department

1. Pakistan occupying huge chunks of the territory of Jammu and Kashmir consolidated its position in such areas, thereby reducing the over-all Muslim population as the areas were dominantly Muslim. It is estimated that 10 lakh Muslims lived in Pak-occupied areas. As there could be no census operations in the year 1951, the Census Department working under the state administration projected 10% growth rate in the over-all population of the state. It is really dubious that the projected growth rate of 10% was applied to the Kashmirian Hindus, who never inhabited the Pak-occupied areas. Thus, the growth rate of nearly 15% of the Kashmirian Hindu population was not projected for 1941-51 and 25% for 1951-61 as determined by the growth rate of the Kashmirian Hindus

in 1931-41.

2. It appears baffling that the growth rate of the Kashmirian Hindu population was 84.1% in 1971 and suffered a steep decline to 9.4% in 1981 and again shot up to 29.9% in 1991.
3. The Census Department did not work out the actual Hindu population of Kashmir for the year 1951. Without determining it, the Department put their numbers at 63,000 which, in fact, was the Kashmirian Hindu population in the year 1931.
4. The Census Department recorded a decrease of more than 44,000 Kashmirian Hindus during 1941-1961 at an average growth rate of 25%.
5. The census operations conducted by the Islamised bureaucracy have never counted the Kashmirian Hindus in full, thus recording a precipitous fall in their numbers.
6. It is incredible that the Kashmirian Hindus had just 9.4% growth rate when the growth rate of the entire state was 28.97%.

Realities

If the growth rate of 25% of the Kashmirian Hindus in 1931-41 is any guide, the population of the Kashmirian Hindus in 1951 should have been 98,585 as against 78,868 in 1941. In the same fashion deducting 2000 killings in 1947 and the migration of nearly 8000 Kashmirian Hindus till 1951, the population of the Hindus in 1961 at 25% growth rate was 1,13,231 and in 1971 it was nearly 1.47 lac as per 29% growth rate of the over-all state population and in 1981 it was 1.90 lac approximately as per 30% growth rate.

As per 30% projected growth rate for all segments of the state population, the numbers of the Kashmirian Hindus stood at 2.47 lacs in the year 1991.

Besides, eighty thousand (80,000) Hindus speaking Hindi and other Indian languages have been permanently living in Kashmir as in January 1990 when the Muslim marauders raising a battle cry for the Prophet's governance *(Nizam-e-Mustafa)* forced them to leave Kashmir for unknown destinations, scattering them as straws in the wind.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad

Invested with robust commonsense, exemplary grit and courage and astounding administrative skills, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad held the reins of government in the wake of Sheikh Abdullah's deposition in 1953 for anti-national activities underminig the unity and integrity of the country. The fact remains that Bakshi had to face unprecedented challenges from the forces of disintegration and secessionism, which got a new lease of life after Sheikh's dismissal in 1953. In fact, Sheikh Abdullah spearheaded the movement for separatism, secessionism and dis-unity leading to the instability of the state. Though a man of extraordinary courage and political acumen, yet Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad seemed to fight back secessionist forces half-heartedly. Most of the secessionists, they say, were on his pay-rolls. Heading the government for full eleven years, he won both laurels and brick-bats from his admirers and opponents.

Plebiscite Front formed in 1955 as the rallying centre for secessionist forces posed a formidable challenge to the political authority of Bakshi, yet he remained in saddle with the tightest grip over the state machine. His capabilities to face crisis- situations got established when he stabilised his government mobilising all without minding their hue. He had a unique knack of establishing a direct rapport with men at grassroot level and that led to his tremendous popularity with the people of all regions. Bakshi was known for his broad-mindedness, benevolence and munificence.

The policy of espousing the Muslim cause and fostering the Muslim interest touched its apogee in the times of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad. It is he and he alone, who, Muslims in general believe, is supposed to have raised them from dust, given them a wash and robed them in glitz and glamour. All corners in the Valley were rummaged for Muslim graduates, who were put to the Training College, Srinagar for the Diploma in Teaching and soon after the completion of the course were directly installed as Headmasters

over-riding the merit, achievements and claims of the veteran Kashmirian Hindu teachers, waiting in the wings for a push-up, a promotion. The processes of supersession started by Sheikh Adbullah touched a new high in Bakshi's tenure generating a simmering discontent in the Kashmirian Hindu teachers and Hindu employees in all departments of the government.

Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad with the least academic achievements had scant respect for merit, academic brilliance and talent. He had no qualms when he got the fairly senior Hindu teachers officered by the Muslims, just beginners and with no worth the name achievements. He was well aware of the unpleasant situations which got developed when the Muslim headmasters actually felt embarrassed to sit in chairs in presence of their Hindu teachers, who had taught them. Not heeding it, Bakshi went on humiliating the veteran teachers by promoting the junior most Muslims as their officers.

The onus of rendering incalculable damage to the cause of education in the State of Jammu and Kashmir squarely rested on Bakshi, who was out to appease the Muslims every way. Violation of all norms as a weapon to promote the Muslim cause was generally resorted to and over the years it got evolved as the only standard norm dominating all departments of life. Dr. K.G. Sayidain, an internationally famed educationist, had to suffer Bakshi's wrath when he expressed his inability to apply communal policy to recruit lecturers in the Department of Higher Education

Bakshi torpedoed the list of lecturers prepared by Dr. Sayidain on the plea that the Muslims, who were not available then, were not represented and hence ignored. The dauntless and unflinching scholar in his capacity as the Adviser to the Department of Higher Education stuck to his guns and defended his decision not to recruit third class M.A.s and M.Sc.s in various colleges of the state. Dr. Sayidain was categoric in teaching his Minister, G.M. Sadiq, that the goals of Muslim education in the state would be best served by putting the learners under the charge and care of academically brilliant teachers, no matter what their religion was. But both Bakshi and Sadiq failed to swallow the secular approach to the issues of education and made the brilliant educationist to depart from the educational scene of the state, thus rendering it an incalculable damage.

The Kashmirian Hindu teachers seething with discontent geared themselves up for a constitutional battle. The goon-brigade reared and raised by Bakshi led an operation against the prominent Hindu

teachers roughing them up and putting them to a great humiliation. It was a matter of shame for the Prime Minister as to have stooped so low for organising such an operation against the veteran Hindu teachers, who were instrumental in changing the educational scenario of the state. Despite repression, the Hindu teachers did not flinch and highlighted their case of blatant discrimination on communal grounds by knocking at the doors of the Apex Court of the country.

Harbouring deep-seated hatred for standard norms and criteria, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad was brash enough to flout and scrap any such recommendations and decisions as would not benefit the Muslims of Kashmir. The State Public Service Commission as an off-shoot of the state constitution functioning under the chairmanship of General Yadu Nath Singh conducted the first K.C.S. examination for the selection of the candidates to fill up the slots in the state administration. Not a single Muslim could pass the written test and those who passed and were cleared for appointment were three Kashmirian Hindus and three Hindus from Jammu province. Strangely, but as expected, few of the brilliant youngmen were appointed to administrative posts for which they were duly selected after undergoing all formalities. Subversion of decisions and recommendations of bodies and committees formed under law was a usual practice of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, who pursued the same pro-Muslim policy-stances at the expense of the Kashmirian Hindu minorities.

Bakshi had all the grains of a despot in him. His whim was his will. Nobody dared challenge his whim or will. In that despotic whim, Bakshi started the ominous practice of appointing the Muslims and men of that brand only directly to the gazetted cadres in contravention of all rules and norms. Most of them, of course, were influential, wielding a political clout, but were not indispensable. This type of measure over the years got perfected as a usual practice for recruiting below average Muslims to all types of cadre posts damaging the legitimate interests of old hands already in service. That the Muslims are to be appeased was the standard policy of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad. He appeased them by showering all manner of concessions on them. The Muslims availed of the concessions from free education to free rations, but as ungratefuls they hated him the most apparently for his pro-India politics.

Harassment and kidnaping of the Kashmirian Hindu girls continued even in the time of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad. Cultureless

Muslims bordering on barbarity and far removed from the light of civilisation have been raising the ugly and uncouth slogan – 'We want Pakistan without Pundits but with Panditanis' (Kashmirian Hindu women). No sane Muslim, which perhaps is a rare commodity, has ever expressed his deep sense of resentment against the barbaric content of the slogan, which would be a source of extreme joy and glee to Muslims, whether literate or semi-literate, a street hawker or a man in corridors of power. It being the back-drop of the Muslim psyche, numerous cases of intimidation and molestation of the Hindu women were almost a daily occurrence. Normally such situations were tolerated and if a case here or a case there was ever reported, police authorities dragged their feet from registering it as the men involved used to be invariably Muslims, who as a matter of state policy were to be shielded and protected. The goons thus emboldened were a menance for the community of Hindus.

Lifting of girls from the gates of the educational institutions was a common-day affair and the law-enforcing agencies conniving at the criminal acts, never acting by bringing the criminals to book and standing as mute witnesses to the sordid spectacles. An ordinary, low grade employee basking in the sun of political patronage, committed the heinous crime of dumping a Hindu girl into a vehicle at the gates of a reputed academic institution in broad-day light with scores of policemen witnessing the scene. The girl saved herself by raising a hue and cry. No FIR was filed and no punitive action taken against the employee working in Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad's private office.

Not that Bakshi had any love lost for the Kashmirian Hindus, whom he consigned to a dust-bin but somehow he handed over a minor Hindu girl to the care of her parents at a time when the Muslims in their full frenzy were demonstrating, mobilising funds and the *Mullahs* confirming that the girl had already entered into a marriage contract with the Muslim boy. Without much prevarication, putting his foot down, he ordered the pro-Muslim police to deal with the situation firmly. Earning the wrath of the fanatic Muslims, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad saved the situation from further deterioration and he did it on the plea that such developments were sure to damage the Muslim interests at national plane.

The blatant discrimination of the Kashmirian Hindus in all walks of life touched all time high in Bakshi's time. Honour and dignity of the Hindus was at stake. The Muslim goons enjoying political patronage ruled the roost. The Kashmirian Hindus called on the then

Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru and brought their woeful plight to his notice. Taking it seriously, Pandit Nehru, while addressing the National Conference workers at Bakshi's private office, certainly made a reference to the Kashmirian Pandits who through their merit and hard work had come to top positions in the country. A rod to the foolish and a nod to the wise. Bakshi never took the nod and continued with his policy of discrimination and neglect unto the Kashmirian Hindus.

Marathon Battle for Restoration of Rights

With their cup of patience full and brimming, the Kashmirian Hindu teachers determined to fight the blatant discrimination based on sheer communalism filed a petition in the Supreme Court of India. They, mustering their meagre resources, sought the legal aid of Messrs M.C. Seetalvad, Ashok Sen and Ramamurty only to highlight the woeful conditions of the entire Hindu community, which was labelled as the creamy layer of the Kashmirian society and hence as per the misconceived stipulation was to be shorn of all constitutional rights and given the treatment of aliens in their own home-land. The rulers given to the appeasement of the Muslim majority ignored all the petitions, representations and pleadings of the teachers, who had been ridden rough-shod, humiliated and subjected to scornful insolence. As citizens of India, no despot could deprive them of the right to seek justice for the wrongs perpetrated on them. It was thus that the first writ petition Trikoni Nath Vs the State of Jammu and Kashmir was born.

The writ petition sent shock waves throughout the length and breadth of the Valley of Kashmir, nay the entire State of Jammu and Kashmir. The number of teachers involved was the entire Muslim teaching community of the state. They in recognition of their religious denomination were pushed over the heads of numerous Hindu teachers, who failed to reconcile to the cruel and unjust treatment they were subjected to only on religious grounds.

The government fought the case and justified the promotions primarily on the basis of backwardness. 'Was it social backwardness or economic backwardness ?' It, however, could not decisively establish and assert. Social and economic backwardness could not encompass all the Muslims for all times to the exculsion of all the Kashmirian Hindus wherever and whenever there was a promotion.

The Apex Court could not digest the argument of the state government communally motivated to espouse the cause of the Muslims. It referred the case to the State High Court for purposes of determining the criterion of backwardness, whether social or economic or both.

Court processes being dilatory dampened the spirits of the Kashmirian Hindu teachers. But they took it as a battle waged for restoration of normal democratic rights conferred on citizens in all forms of democratic dispensations and continued with it despite harassment and money constraints. Finally, the case came up for discussions and the lawyer, Mr. Ramamurty, representing the Hindu, teachers, made the government prosecutors and the Education Secretary eat dust by devastating the entire argument justifying the Muslims as a backward community. Justice Bah-ud-din[1] was visibly carried over by the argumentative knack of Mr. Ramamurty, who convincingly argued that the government policy vis-a-vis backwardness of Muslims was discriminatory against the Kashmirian Hindus. Yet, when the judgment was delivered, the State High Court laboured to smoke screen and side-line the essential issue and digressed where it was expected to be exact and precise. The Supreme Court of India was not satisfied with the verdict of the State High Court and castigated Justice Bah-ud-din for begin inexact and inaccurate where he had to be exact and accurate to meet the ends of Law and Justice.

The Supreme Court, however, delivered the judgment on the suit Triloki Nath Vs the State of Jammu and Kashmir quashing all the previous orders of promotion based on communally motivated criteria fixed from time to time. The judgment *ipso facto* upheld seniority as a fundamental factor and criterion for promotions. The factor of backwardness devised by the Muslim rulers only to trample upon the basic rights of the Kashmirian Hindus was struck down as extra-constitutional.

The government apparently implemented the judgement, but devised a cunning way of allowing all the Muslims to continue to hold their offices as 'in-charge' headmasters or tehsil education officers and as per the contents of the judgment they had to be reverted to their original position of teachers. The posture of the government only subverted the entire judgment vindicating the rights of a community of teachers, who were not Muslims.

The Kashmirian Hindu teachers had once again to knock at the doors of the Supreme Court of India. A suit was filed challenging

the validity of the government orders seeking to defend the reverted lot of the Muslim officers by the conferment of 'in-charge' status on them. Reason dictated that if 'in- charge' officers had to be appointed, the teachers who stood vindicated by the Supreme Court judgment were legally eligible for conferment of such a status. Thus another suit S.N. Challo Vs the State of Jammu and Kashmir was born.

The suit dragged on at least for four years. In the meantime, the government out to subvert the court judgment resorted to the method of 'interviews' designed to pull down the merit and academic credentials of the Kashmirian Hindu teachers. Seeing through the game of the Muslim rulers aided by the Islamised bureaucracy, the Hindu teachers boycott the interviews whole-hog, thus turning turtle the cart of the Muslims working to smother and undo the legitimate interests of a community facing worst- ever discrimination and persecution.

The Supreme Court was informed of the sly and underhand measures devised by the Islamised state with a view to rendering the entire judgment as infructuous and inoperative.

Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq had already taken over the reins of the government. Despite his progressive and Marxist credentials, he had been responsible for the creation of a sordid state of affairs engulfing the community of teachers, who had lost their fundamental right to live as dignified citizens of a secular democracy. He somehow appeared to be convinced to sort out the mess created by the Supreme Court judgments and the Islamised bureaucracy straining every nerve to subvert it. He and his State Minister of Education held parleys with the aggrieved lot only to discover a via-media for saving the Muslim teachers from facing reversion. G.M. Sadiq all the time was ambivalent and non-committal, not mustering guts to work against the Muslim interests, which he had assiduously garnered at the cost of other ethnic groups. His Minister of State, Noor Mohammad, was openly out to destroy and negate the judgment. He insisted upon the Kashmirian Hindu teachers to attend the interviews and assured them that the 'bulk' would be appointed to higher posts. 'In-charge' appointments and 'interviews' were the two devices which the Islamised bureaucracy with the connivance of the rulers that be contrived and banked upon to retrieve the Muslims from the prospects of facing demotion by virtue of the Supreme Court judgment.

Under a terrible pressure from the governmental machine, the pioneer of the whole constitutional battle, Mr. T.N. Tiku, was for attending the interviews, which by the majority of the Kashmirian Hindu teachers was deemed only as a ploy to subvert the Supreme Court judgment. The tussle between Mr. Tiku and rest of his colleagues finally resulted in his bowing out. Mr. Tiku[2] broke but did not fall. He pioneered a movement and led it with zeal and acumen. He launched a marathon battle against the forces masquerading as secularists only to expose their non-secular hues. Mr. S.N. Challoo took the lead in carrying on the battle to its ultimate logical end.

Another writ petition Makhan Lal Waza Vs the State of Jammu and Kashmir was launched against men in corridors of power paying lip service to the Constitution of India and the State Constitution, but practically working for their subversion and destruction, thus creating conditions for the negation and substitution of Rule of Law by the Rule of Jungle. The Supreme Court was irked by the string of writ petitions against the State Government, which was all reluctant to implement the historic judgment exploding the myth of Muslim backwardness. Eminent Jurists like M.C. Seetalvad and Ashok Sen vigorously pleaded the case of the Kashmirian Hindus leaving the court convinced of the communal treatment meted out to them and also pleading for striking down the promotions based on communal grounds and the Supreme Court of India did strike down all the promotions as unconstitutional making it clear that 'backwardness' needed be categorically defined and 'interviews' were not the only criterion for promotions.

Reversions followed. All those who were superseded were promoted. Over 700 supersessions were removed and 300 demotions were apparently effected. The government policy of violation of rules and regulations for feeding and meeting the ends of pure communalism got exposed and the rulers at state level lost face and suffered an exposure for the lip-service that they had been paying to secularism and the cause of democracy. What has been astounding is that it was not a handful of Muslims who were feeding and fanning communalism, but the entire state apparatus was working strenuously to entrench blatant communalism and sectarianism in the polity of Kashmir.

The writ petitions filed by the Kashmirian Hindu teachers should not be taken as those which are normally filed by the citizens of

India for restoration of their justifiable rights. The petitions represented the culmination of the unjust and blatant discrimination they had been subjected to since 1947. The first ever petition was filed by Pandit Gopi Nath Koul against the state government in the times of Sheikh Abdullah, but was rejected on sheer flimsy grounds. Communalism as an entrenched policy of the Jammu and Kashmir Government led to the hounding out of other ethnic groups, which raised their solid voice against their neglect and discrimination. The communal criteria for recruitment, admissions and trainings were devised only to benefit, and favour the Kashmirian Muslims leaving other ethnic groups high and dry, deprived and uncared for.

The writ petitions suffered a maze of judicial processes for more than a period of five years, which proved quite trying for the Hindu teachers in particular and the Hindus in general. The fallout of the petitions was quite predictable. The Muslim majority as a result of unbounded and extreme hostility created agonising conditions for the Hindus who were blatantly harassed and intimidated and the powers that be ramming it home to them that they would not be allowed to grab everything in Kashmir. What was that which the Kashmirian Hindus had grabbed was never explicitly explained and as a last resort they fuelled the communal fires to mobilise the Muslims against the Hindus. There were protests, strikes, demonstrations, and all manners of reactions. The Muslim teachers stopped working in schools mobilising the Muslim students against the Hindu teachers. Every school was turned into a battle-ground. It was a well-manipulated move only to desist the Kashmirian Hindu teachers from pursuing the petitions in the Apex Court and also pressurising them not to demand the implementation of the Court verdict after it was delivered.

In the process an organisation of the Muslim backwards suddenly got formed with the patronage from powers that be. Mr. Mahi-ud-din Kak was its president and Saif-ud-din Soz, then a school teacher, its general secretary. The agenda pursued by the organisation had communal and sectarian overtones only to thwart the Kashmirian Hindus from seeking justice. What was the significance of the organisation when the case was already in the Apex Court of the country ? Court alone was the forum where the case could be fought not by muscle-power, but by reason, cogency, rationality and argumentation. As the case was violative of all Constitutional provisions, the Muslim Backward organisation emerged only to exert pressure on the Kashmirian Hindus to withdraw the case or face consequences. That was the role-model of the organisation, which

turned every school in cities, towns or villages into a battle-ground for waging war against the Hindus by raising religious battle-cries, thus lending momentum to the worst-ever hate-campaign against the Hindus. The war waged on the Kashmirian Hindu teachers with schools run by the state government as the battle-ground was carried on in full knowledge of the powers that be. It had their absolute blessings. The rulers provided the organisation with money and patronage for pursuing a relentless campaign against the Kashmirian Hindu teachers, who were characterised as the enemies of Islam. The organisation of the Muslim Backwards had all the Jamaat-i-Islami teachers in its front ranks with other ranks of teachers owing allegiance to left parties, Congress and National Conference following their direction and lead. Saif-ud-din Soz was stated to be associated with Jamaat-i-Islami pursuing rabid Muslim communalism and hate against the Hindu minorities. He is on record to have threatened to snap the thread of accession to India if the Supreme Court judgment was implemented leading to the reversion of the Muslims.

Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq acted under the relentless and constant pressure of the organisation of the Muslim Backwards, which operating under communal motivations had mobilised support from all government departments. He allowed the monster of communalism to grow in size leading to a vertical crack in the genuine teachers organisation embracing broad sections of teachers upholding secular agenda. Objectively speaking, G.M. Sadiq did not and could not contribute to any such act as would inflict damage on the Muslim interests or jeopardise them in any manner. He could be personally held responsible for the polarisation of the two religious communities by upholding the Muslim cause entirely to the detriment of the miniscule minority of the Hindus.

Under the government patronage, a Backward Muslims conference was held at Tagore Hall for full three days. Among others the conference was attended by the State Minister of Education, Noor Mohammad. The Director of Education attended the conference lending his full patronage to it. The expenditure was said to be met by the government. The fact remains that the ends of the conference were not fully met as various proposals cropped up for a possible solution to the crisis generated by the processes of the writ petitions. The government practically under the tight leash of the Muslims was in a quandary. If it implemented the Court verdict, the Muslims pampered throughout and fed on a staple fare of concessions, got estranged and if it threw the verdict into a dust-bin, the Kashmirian Hindus would go only to knock at the doors of the Apex Court for

the implementation of the verdict. But, unmindful of the disinherited community of Hindus, the government led by rabid Muslims was entirely indifferent to implement the Court decision and was desperately in search of ploys and *alibis* to circumvent law and ends of justice. The Kashmirian Muslims were never taught to be the citizens of a country which had a Constitution upholding Rule of Law. What the Muslims did was to subvert Rule of Law only to pave way for the Muslim precedence at the expense of other ethnic groups.

The Kashmirian Hindu teachers promoted as a result of the marathon constitutional battle fought and won were never given independent charge of educational institutions and were put only as appendages to the Muslim officers, who practically did not face demotion or reversion. The governments of various hues went on contriving and devising means to perpetuate the third-degree status of the Kashmirian Hindus by allowing the Muslims to usurp all types of jobs over-riding the claims of other ethnic groups. Sheikh Abdullah, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, G.M. Sadiq and Mir Qasim – all pursued the same policy of pampering the Muslims at the cost of other citizens, ignoring them and perpetuating their poverty levels. Court verdicts exposing the communal motivations of the rulers that be never proved a deterrent in any manner.

Notes and References

1. Mr. Bahu-ud-din was the Chief Justice of J&K High Court. He resigned when transferred to Sikkim. He is now the chief exponent of the Muslim militants in Kashmir.
2. T.N. Tiku was a brilliant teacher, who served the cause of education in Kashmir. But, his claims to higher positions were always overlooked by the myopic Islamic bureaucracy. He led a movement for restoration of justifiable rights. He was manhandled and roughed up by Bakshi's goon brigade and Jamaat hoodlums for fighting a constitutional battle. The Muslim terrorists, who had been his students, put his house at Sopore to flames. This is how his services to the Muslims were recompensed.
3. Refer to Supreme Court judgments for more details.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq

There is no denying the fact that Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq was soft, sophisticated, cultured and educated. He had a reputation for honesty and unlike other National Conference stalwarts he was not wedded to corruption and under-hand means of amassing wealth. He was a Marxist and had contacts with the Marxists of all hues within the country. He had the distinction of leading a brilliant group of young communists (Hindus) within the National Conference. As an ideologue of National Conference, he was seriously heard by all hues of politicians. That he was a man of conviction is the general assessment made by various levels of people having come into contact with him.

Being essentially an arm-chair politician, G.M. Sadiq was absolutely lacking in dynamism and mobility, stamina and grit. Though proverbially honest, yet he failed to give the state an administration which could be termed as clean, free from corruption and communalism. Aware of the interference in governmental affairs by Miss Mahmooda Ahmad Ali Shah, said to be his wife, he allowed her to grow as a parallel centre of power. Even his sister, Zainab Begum, could not resist from interfering in administrative affairs.

G.M. Sadiq for his sterling qualities of head and heart enjoyed immense popularity with the Kashmirian Hindus, who supported him in his political wrangles against Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad. That he would be soft and considerate to them was belied by his pursuit of discriminatory policies against them. There was no letup in the policy of harassment and economic squeeze of the Kashmirian Hindus. The Muslims continued to be his utmost concern and the Hindus were virtually consigned to backwaters with not even subservient role to play.

It was G.M. Sadiq who formalised the blatant discrimination of the Kashmirian Hindus by the issuance of an order reserving 30% of job slots, promotions and admissions to training and technical

institutions for the Kashmirian Hindus and 70% for the Kashmirian Muslims. The said-order was not accepted by the Islamised bureaucracy, which consistently pursued the policy of putting the Kashmirian Hindus to an agonising economic squeeze. Discrimination went on trampling upon the rights of the minorities. No political leader except G.M. Sadiq dared resort to such a measure based on flagrant communal considerations and sectarianism.

The order proved a land-mark in the history of discrimination and relentless elimination of the Kashmirian Hindus. Violative of the constitutional provisions, the orders were outrageously communal making religion as a determining factor for entry into services and admissions into professional colleges. What was shocking that such orders were issued at the behest of G.M. Sadiq, who had pretensions to secular and progressive credentials. The Kashmirian Hindus did not take orders lying down, but opposed it tooth and nail. They termed the orders as black orders contravening the constitutional tenets and provisos. The Hindus upheld merit and academic achievements as the determining factors of recruitment in services and admissions to professional colleges and technical institutions.

Exposing the communal hue and underpinnings of the said order, the Kashmirian Hindus rammed it home to the National Conference leadership that it belied the promises held out to them in the blue print of 'Naya Kashmir', essentially a document of secularism upholding even-handed treatment to all communities without religious considerations. Thus, G.M. Sadiq was held guilty of axing and eroding the very ideals which he had cherished all through his political career. By the issuance of such an order, he appeared no different from Bakshi, who granted admission to the Muslim boys and girls without suffering any rigours of test and interview, from Sheikh Abdullah, who heralded the process of supersessions, from Mir Qasim, who grabbed small holdings of land from the Kashmirian Hindus, from Farooq Abdullah, who led to the hounding out of the minorities from their home-land by feeding and shielding communally tilted secessionist forces.

Let it be known that the Islamised bureaucracy never put 30% reservations for the Kashmirian Hindus into actual practice. It only threw crumbs and left-overs to them and hired and fired at will and whim.

The educational institutions and other departments in the state were starved of trained and qualified teachers and staff. Appointments

to various job-slots were not made or deferred only because most of the applicants happened to be the Kashmirian Hindus, who as a matter of state policy were to be side lined. The crusade in Kashmir has been against merit, academic achievements, and scholarship. Impeccable academic credentials never formed a plank for entry into state services or admission in the professional colleges. Many a Hindu bright has lost careers. A Muslim boy or girl with very low percentage of marks finds admission in various professional colleges. What has been the travesty of justice is that many Muslims with no back-ground knowledge of science were admitted to engineering and medical colleges. That admissions to various study programmes and entry into job slots are determined by the population ratio of a particular community has been the Muslim approach to the entire gamut of the problem.[1] G.M. Sadiq proved the worst for the Kashmirian Hindus, not only that they were subjected to the atrocious discrimination on religious grounds but were also openly assaulted and hurt inflicted on them. On 11th September, 1964, a group of Muslim boatment dared construct a shed on a piece of land owned by a Kashmirian Hindu.[2] Objecting to the illegal act of raising a shed on the piece of land, the Hindu family had to face an awalanche of hostility on part of Muslims got collected in hordes from the area only to launch a physical assault on the members of the family. Men were severly beaten and roughed up, women were dragged out of their houses suffering grievous injuries and their gold ornaments snatched. Taking it as a *Jehad* against the infidels, all Muslims losing cool and sanity stood as monolith to grab the piece of land owned by a Hindu.

The culprits were not arrested nor were they punished for the unlawful act. The Muslims as a matter of rule were beyond the purview of law. The whole atrocity was brought to the notice of the Chief Minister, G.M. Sadiq, who had full faith in rule of law but never moved in the direction of establishing rule of law in the state he ruled.

A representation was also submitted to the Prime Minister of India bringing the lawless conditions prevailing in the state to his notice. But nothing transpired. The boatmen with the support of their co-religionists proved a menance for the Kashmirian Hindus in the area subjecting them to a barrage of abuse, harassment and intimidation and the law enforcing agencies maintaining strong silence. The entire situation, bordering on communal clashes were reported in a local Daily and the government went to the extent of

arresting three journalists and stopping the publication of a daily paper.

The policy of discrimination concertedly pursued by the Islamised bureaucracy of the state caused an immeasurable frustration and despair in the Hindu boys and girls of the Valley of Kashmir. Twenty Hindu boys and girls having been ignored for admissions to the professional colleges, despite their merit and achievements, declared their conversion to Islam as the state was not only pro-Muslim, but seemed to be pro-Muslim. A Sikh boy also expressed the same view and was ready to accept Islam.[3] The policy of relentless persecution of non-Muslim ethnic groups was vigorously pursued to eliminate them or force them to get converted to Islam.

Such developments culminated in the regime of G.M. Sadiq, who perhaps contributed to the view-point of 'religion being opium for the masses', yet he pursued a policy based on religious discrimination investing it with legitimacy and sanctity.

G.M. Sadiq in the name of normalisation made a truce with the rabid Muslim forces working for discrimination and secessionism. He lent them a new lease by loosening the grip over their anti-national activities, thus emboldening them for waging a war on the minorities, who have all along been the soft targets of the Muslim bigotry. Allowing the rabid Muslims to creep into the state administration, Sadiq practically allowed the state machine to slip into the hands of anti-national and non-secular forces. The Jamaat-i-Islami had been in the process of spreading its tentacles by establishing its support-base in a number of pockets. The *Madrasas* run by the rabid organisation were getting government grants and thus were busy in vitiating the entire socio-political fabric of the state. Most of the government run schools were staffed by men and women owing allegiance to the Jamaat-i-Islami enjoying political patronage. The organisation spreading communal canker was working slowly, but surely. No positive and purposive steps were taken to meet the challenge and counteract the vicious propaganda of the Jammat-i-Islami, which was directly affiliated to the Jamaat-i-Islami of Pakistan. Jamaat-oriented cadre had been in the process of sneaking into administration and police.

Pandit Rishi Dev,[4] a veteran leader of the congress in Kashmir, posed the problem of a Kashmirian Hindu teacher to G.M. Sadiq holding the portfolio of Education. The paralysed parents of the teacher had been confined to bed for a long time. Being the only

son, the unfortunate couple needed his care and attention. Pandit Rishi Dev requested the Chief Minister to transfer the teacher to his native hamlet or a nearby village. What Sadiq did was to ask the Hindu leader to deposit the application with his secretary. The same was done. Meanwhile a Molvi flaunting long beard hailing from Rishi Dev's village was led into the Chief Minister's chambers. He was cordially received and requested the Chief Minister to appoint his daughter, a middle pass, to the post of a teacher. His application was taken. To Rishi Dev's consternation, within a week's time, the Molvi's daughter was sent the appointment letter and the Hindu teacher was not transferred on humanitarian grounds. And this testifies to the instinctive hatred which the Muslims of all complexions harboured for the Kashmirian Hindus.

Miss Mahmooda Ahmad Ali Shah, the virtual ruler in the times of G.M. Sadiq, was out to destroy the service career of a Hindu professor when he stopped coaching a close relation of G.M. Sadiq in the college hostel.[5] The girl hailing from Palhalan, district Baramulla, was below average with no learning capacities and the professor feared that he might be harassed for the below normal performance of the girl in exams. That was what led the professor to stop from going to the hostel for coaching the girl. He was persuaded to resume the coaching, but the professor stuck to his guns and showed his inability to resume it. It was sufficient to offend Miss Mahmooda, the principal of the college. Within days he was involved in a case of moral turpitude and suspension orders followed. Mr. Noor-ud-din, the vice-chancellor of the Kashmir University, was appointed as an enquiry officer to probe the whole affair. He paid a visit to the college and on preliminary enquiries dismissed the whole case as personal vendetta and gave a clean chit to the professor, who was transferred from women's college, Srinagar.

The tragedy of the Kashmirian Hindus is that they as a matter of state policy are to be discriminated and hounded out at every level, but are first coaxed and then ordered and coerced to teach the sons and daughters and very close relatives of the Muslims in corridors of power. Why they do not depend on the Muslims now manning all educational institutions in the state needs be researched.

G.M. Sadiq in pursuit of discriminatory policies virtually brought about the death of the educational institutions as vibrant, open and wholesome places shaping the maleable human material for higher achievements and healthy roles. The teachers moulding the human

material were discriminated on religious grounds and their ambitions for career building stifled. The same discriminatory policy was pursued in the institutions of higher learning. And the State Public Service Commission came handy for serving the ends of divisive communalism.

The Commission has all along been staffed by men and women, who have risen to top echelons only through the policy of manipulation and discrimination. Objectively speaking, it appears that the Commission is under an oath to serve the Muslim ends and interests. It knows the alchemy to transform gold into dross and dross into gold. The Commission has a gory history of slaughtering the careers of brilliant young men and women, mostly Hindus. To serve the Muslims, it has established a permanent liaison with the professors of the Aligarh Muslim University, who are favourably inclined to uphold the Muslim interests at the expense of other ethnic groups. And Mr. Bakar is the only star in the firmament of the Indian Academics. He is an expert for all levels of appointments. The crux of the intent is that men of such hue are convenient to handle while scholars from other universities are too tough to be handled to meet sectarian ends.

Pursuing a policy of blatant discrimination the State Public Service Commission has set new records in the book of discrimination when a Muslim lecturer in physics with 5 years of total service was pushed over the head of Prof. T.N. Kilam on the verge of retirement. The criteria framed by the state government and the Commission were discriminatory and arbitrary. Rating scales were such as would benefit the Muslims only. Basic parameters of merit, academic achievements and experience were distorted and left out as redundant. The rumour mill had it that the professors recommended for promotion and subsequently promoted were of the 'chikan brand'. Chikan was a rabid Muslim, corrupt and communal, got rehabilitated by Sadiq under the policy of 'normalisation' and was placed on the Public Service Commission.

Not taking the tyranny lying down, the Kashmirian Hindus were in the vanguard of the battle for restoration of fundamental rights as enshrined in the Constitution. A writ petition was filed in the State High Court against the Government of Jammu and Kashmir. The case was fought by the State Government on the basis of the norms fixed by the government ignoring the genuine parameters. The Hon'ble Justice Murtaza Fazli Ali struck down the promotions

stressing that he was yet to 'learn of an alchemy transmuting gold into dross and dross into gold.'[6] Such a policy of discrimination was consistently pursued in all departments of the government trampling upon the rights of the Hindus. The Muslim rulers conveying to the Muslims that they were fostering their interests and the Kashmirian Hindus banking only on constitutional remedies. In fact, in face of such tyranny, it were the constitutional guarantees only that had been sustaining the Kashmirian Hindus till they were forced to march out of their land of birth.

II

Kashmiri Pandit Agitation

It was only in the regime of G.M. Sadiq that a poor and destitute Hindu girl was abducted, converted to Islam and married to a Muslim boy. Living a life of extreme poverty, she was obliged to take up a petty job in the co-operative department. A Muslim boy worked in the same department and for one reason or the other, blackmailed her with the aid of other Muslims working in the same department. The Muslim boy got her pay stopped and put her on duty at odd hours. He having misappropriated some money from the department did not suffer suspension or enquiry, But his officer, also a Muslim, paid off the cash and abetted the boy in black-mailing the girl. The boy emboldened by the abettment of his Muslim colleagues made off with the girl. The mother of the girl reported the matter to the local police station. The abductor and the abducted girl were finally traced by the police to a house at Wazapora, a den of rabid Muslims owing allegiance to Pakistan.

The preliminary investigation was conducted by the Muslim officer at Maharaj Gunj, not at Rainawari, where the FIR was filed. Be it said that the police station at Rainawari was headed by a Hindu. The girl was later shifted to the Police Station at Khanyar, a Muslim dominated locality, where not a single Hindu lives. It was done only to facilitate the abductor to meet the girl quite frequently and finally the girl was handed over to the Muslim criminal illegally without completing all formalities including the radiological examination.

The government was extremely cautious in not associating any Hindu with the investigation. The mother was allowed to see her daughter only under the police surveillance. No member of the Hindu

community was allowed to meet the girl in camera. The police did not take the case to a court of law and assigning judicial powers unto itself decided to allow the abducted girl to live with the abductor. The age of the girl was not properly ascertained and rumour mill had it that the Muslim officer investigating the case accompanied the abductor and the abducted girl to the abductor's residence where he was treated to a delicious dinner. Agitated over the scandalous role of Islamised police machinery there was a spontaneous reaction and deep-seated resentment among the public.[7]

The Kashmirian Pandit agitation exposed to the hilt the secular credentials of the Muslims in general and G.M. Sadiq in particular. The Muslims lost all elements of rationality and let loose a reign of terror only to silence the Hindu protest against the forcible conversion and subsequent marriage to a Muslim of a Hindu girl living in indigent conditions. G.M. Sadiq utterly failed to curb the Muslim bigotry, which he fuelled by aligning himself with the forces of obscurantism and medievalism.

The police forces already Islamised inflicted unprecedented brutalities on the Kashmirian Hindus, who were put to bullets, teargassed and lathi-charged. Indiscriminate arrests were made by passing all constitutional guarantees. The publication of newspapers was banned by the government including the official organ of the Hindu community. Their editors were unlawfully detained. Acid was thrown on women protesting against the severe onslaught launched against them violating their honour and dignity as members of a civilised polity. The police brutalities were harrowing and bone-chilling. The Report of the Kohli Commission in this behalf is revealing. The government for fear of reprisals and exposure suppressed the entire Report and never put it before the public gaze and constitutionally framed fora.

The two Ministers of the Sadiq Cabinet, Pir Giyas-ud-Din and Noor Mohammad, in complicity with Abdul Ahad Burza, a close relative of the Chief Minister, distributed money and liquor among the Muslim rabids only to organise a massive demonstration against the Kashmirian Hindus, who had been wronged and denied the right to live with honour and dignity. The procession comprising all hues of Muslim rabids raised Islamic war-cries, archaic and volatile only to coerce the Hindus into submission. The frenzied crowds yelled, "We are fighting infidels'.[8] The Muslim crowds looted and plundered the properties of the Kashmirian Hindus and finally set them ablaze.[9]

Be it said that loot and plunder are an essential part of the Muslim ethos.

The Muslims losing traces of sanity stabbed two youngmen, H. N. Mattoo and Avtar Krishnan Khashoo to death. Gopi Nath Handoo was wounded and killed. In all nine Hindus were killed in police brutalities or in communal madness.[10] The funeral procession of Maharaj Krishan Razdan and Lassa Koul Badam, who fell to police bullets, was pelted at by the Muslims. A big contingent of the Kashmir Armed police in plain clothes also took part in pelting stones at the funeral procession at Karan Nagar in the city of Srinagar.[11]

Zainab Begum, the sister of G.M. Sadiq, was the person, who bitterly opposed the suggestion to hand over the abudcted girl to a third party as a prelude to the solution of the vexatious problem.[12] The close relatives of the Chief Minister were in the vanguard of the Muslim communalists, who had waged war on the Kashmirian Hindus, demanding stern action against the partisan role of the police machine and more than most protection of their women-folk.[13]

The memorandum submitted to the then Home Minister, Y.B. Chavan, thoroughly exposed the bankruptcy and hollowness of the Muslim mind. The Kashmirian Hindus, who do not keep a knife in their homes and are universally known for non-violence, were accused of having piled up arms and ammunition in temples and residential quarters. Who had sent the arms? Who had received the arms? Did the police authorities recover arms and ammunition from a single temple? If arms and ammunition were recovered from temples and residential quarters, did the police prepare their inventories and file FIRs? Were the cases filed against the accused? The Muslims through the memorandum also made a reference to the seizure of the truck-loads of armaments and the Hindus subjecting the Muslim crowds to atrocities.[14] The same propaganda spree was launched by the Plebiscite Frònters, who pioneered communalism, secessionism and separatism in the state.

The fact of the matter remains that the government circles in collaboration with the Muslim bigots launched a campaign of calumny, hatred and disinformation against the Kashmirian Hindus. The Muslims with low levels of rational analysis and prone to religious frenzy took the contents of the false propaganda for granted and rallied behind the forces of hatred and bigotry for waging war against the Kashmirian Hindus. The present day Muhta Khans resort to his strategy to exterminate infidelity from Kashmir. That the miniscule

minority of Hindus had posed a threat of annihilation to the Muslim majority was nothing but ironical. All the same the Muslims believed that myth. What a naivity !

The Kashmiri Pandit Agitation ended leaving a trail of bitterness resulting in the segregation of the two communities of the Hindus and the Muslims. The credibility of the Congress as an organisation upholding secularism and democracy as cherished values suffered a nose-dive. Completely identifying itself with the forces of Muslim reaction, it sufficiently pointered to the ominous developments that were in store for the polity of Kashmir at large. Under the facade of 'normalisation' and 'democratisation', the forces of disruption, secession and communal hatred, though temporarily and half-heartedly put to leash by the Bakshi government, were allowed to get unleashed and given a long rope to resurge and re-generate a movement drawing support from the masses at an unprecedented scale.

Men of dubious character having forged links with elements from across the border were rehabilitated and placed at key-slots in the administrative setup. The process of anti-national elements sneaking into the administrative machine gained momentum. The Chief Minister shut up in his drawing room weaving political phantasies perceptibly allowed the entire state machine to slip into the lap of Plebiscite Fronters and pro-Pak elements leaving a deep-seated negative of impact on the nationalists and democrats working for unity, solidarity and communal peace and amity.

The Congress pandering the Muslim frenzy that automatically touches immeasurable heights on an issue like the conversion and marriage of a Hindu girl to a Muslim resorted to the mean strategy of coercing the Hindu minority into subjugation and surrender by mobilising the frenzied Muslim hordes on the staple diet of jehad (religious war) against the infidels *(kafirs)*. The rabid communal elements operating with absolute freedom with the entire Congress government at the fuelling end repeated history for the Kashmirian Hindus subjecting them to loot, murder and arson.

Notes and References

1. Plebiscite Front Resolution.

2. P. L. Koul, *Crisis in Kashmir.*
3. Report published in *Daily Pratap.*
4. Interview with Pt. Rishi Dev, a veteran Congress leader, whose entire structural property was set ablaze by the Muslim terrorists.
5. Interview with the Teachers Forum.
6. Judgment on writ petition filed by College Teachers in the J & K High Court.
7. *Wail of the Vale*, issued by the Hindu Action Committee.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*
12. P.L. Koul, *Crisis in Kashmir.*
13. *Wail of the Vale.*
14. The Memorandum of 'Respectable (Muslim) citizens of Kashmir'. submitted to Home Minister of India, Y.B. Chavan.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Sayyed Mir Qasim

With the demise of G.M. Sadiq, it was Mir Qasim who took over the reins of government in December, 1971. In the very life-time of G.M. Sadiq he tried to dislodge him from the seat of power, but could not succeed in face of Mrs. Gandhi's rebuff to him and all his supporters demanding a change of leadership in the state. Mir Qasim could not abandon the Congress mantle, but continued to be in the party. His relations with the Chief Minister were not very cordial after his attempt at staging a *coup* against him.

Mir Qasim had leftist leanings. He was connected with the Communist Party of Kashmir, which had arranged for his studies at the Aligarh Muslim University and even financed him till he completed his studies.[1] He started his career as the Personal Assistant of Mirza Afzal Beg, who beat all records of sectarian and communal politics. Having come into contact with him, Qasim's leftist orientation melted away. He joined the band-wagon of all National Conference leaders, who were all through rooted in the visceral hatred of the Kashmirian Hindus. He was the same Congressite like many others, oriented the Muslim way, working for sectarian ends, with the Muslim interests close to his heart.

The Kashmirian Hindus having been bereft of large chunks of land without compensation were subjected to another swoop when Mir Qasim as the head of the Congress regime snatched small holdings from them fixing nominal compensation which too was mis-appropriated and eaten away by the Islamised revenue hierarchy. To benefit the neo-rich peasant, the legislation was so sectarian and unjust that in case the government acquired a portion of land in public interest, the compensation was to be paid not to the owner of the land, but to the tenant, who was a Muslim.

Mir Qasim continued with the discriminatory policies of the previous governments of all hues. He, in fact, added new chapters to the book of discrimination against the Hindus by initiating moves

and measures smacking of blatant communalism. The 70% reservation for the Kashmirian Muslims[2] was meticulously stuck to, but 30% reservations for the Kashmirian Hindus were eroded only to benefit the Muslim majority. The admission of the Hindu brights to multifarious study programmes and professional trainings were trimmed to incredible limits. Despite incredible rise in the standard of life and living of the Muslims in general, Mir Qasim conformed to the thesis of his Muslim predecessors that they were all backward and bereft and hence needed all concessions, subsidies and aids only to ameliorate their lot.

Mir Qasim as the head of the Congress regime was identified with corruption and nepotism. The entire supply of eggs to the city of Srinagar was diverted to the site where his mansion was under construction in a posh colony of the city of Srinagar. All his near and remote relations are on key positions, not because of their unassailable academic achievements, but because of the political clout they wielded.

Mir Qasim followed the foot-prints of his predecessors, who shamelessly exhorted the Muslim Congressites not to sponsor the cases of the Kashmirian Hindus for a transfer to a nearby village or locality, for a job slot in the government, for long-term loans from a bank or a co-operative society or for any other such relief.[3] Disillusioned and dismayed, they abandoned all pretensions to secular thinking and conduct assuming the same role-model that was played by other rabid Muslim elements assiduously working for a communal divide right at the grass-root level. This is how the top Congress leader sowed the seeds of religious discord and religious hatred leading to the undermining of the secular value structure.

Mir Qasim was no different stuff from many others, who were deeply rooted in antipathy and hatred towards the Kashmirian Hindus. He leapt to hear a Muslim and moved earth and sky to solve his problem. What his attitude unto the Kashmirian Hindus was stands illustrated by the instance of a teacher, a Hindu, an M.Com, B.Ed. who was appointed on adhoc basis as a lecturer in teaching of commerce by the Principal, College of Education, Srinagar. The post was referred to the State Public Service Commission, which has the history of changing gold into dross and dross into gold. As expected, a Muslim, M.Com, was recommended for the post and government orders were issued.

The Principal of the college did not allow the lecturer to join

the post on the plea that he had no diploma in teaching, and in the college, methods and not the subject of commerce were to be taught. Meanwhile a deputation comprising Hindus and Muslims called on Mir Qasim, who was sitting in his bed-room and pulling at a *hukka* in a rustic fashion. The entire gamut of the problem was lucidly explained to him. Mir Qasim was curious to learn the name of the person appointed to the post and the delegation cautious enough not to reveal the name. The Chief Minister repeatedly asked about the name of the person appointed to the post and the delegation members assiduously concealing it. Revealing his mind, Mir Qasim, a Congressite and minister in Sadiq's regime, openly said that if the person appointed was a Muslim, he could not help them. The Hindu teacher was very well known to Mir Qasim and had taught all children in the family including Qasim's spouse.[4]

Such were the secular credentials of Mir Qasim, who vied with the Congress and rose to be the Chief Minister of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. In word and deed, he smacked of communalism and sectarian politics. There are instances galore to establish how blatantly he worked to side-line the Kashmirian Hindus only to leave them high and dry. They were the same Hindus who had rallied under the banner of Democratic National Conference, which was treacherously blasted leaving the top leader of the stature of Late Moti Lal Misri in wilderness, frustrated and betrayed. Mr. Misri was the hero of 1947, a stormy petrel, a brilliant thinker and writer. It will be pertinent to put that he was the ghost writer for Mir Qasim in the exchange of letters, which he had with Mrs. Indira Gandhi.

Mir Qasim played quite a dirty role in the Kashmiri Pandit Agitation which was the spontaneous reaction and resentment against the Islamised police force presided over by the people donning Congress mantle. He took it as a simple case of elopement resulting in marriage. A Muslim girl from Bhaderwah had also eloped with a Hindu boy. How was she recovered and returned to the care of her parents ? How do Muslims of all hues assume a uniform pattern of behaviour when it is the case of a Hindu girl even though kidnapped by a Muslim criminal ? Qasim's hands are soiled in the blood of the innocent lives which were lost in communal frenzy generated by men in corridors of power. The Kashmirian Hindus were protesting and agitating non-violently and they were arrested under Defence of India Rules.[5] They were given an inhuman treatment bordering on barbarity. The Congress lumpens in collusion with the rabid Muslims

threw acid on the Kashmirian Hindu women, protesting against the police barbarities. Where was Qasim ? In fact, he had already switched over his loyalties to the communalists masquerading as Plebiscite Fronters, who had started making inroads into the state set-up.

G.M. Sadiq and Mir Qasim keen to perpetuate their personal rule in the state did not spare even D.P. Dhar, who was their life-breath and invested their political ventures with direction and strategy. He was the sentinel of the Indian security guarding the Indian interests at every step. His sterling qualities as a strategist became known when he put down the uprising following the dismissal of the Sheikh in 1953. He saved Sadiq Government from getting toppled when Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad had the go-ahead signal from the majority of the legislature members. He was the fulcrum of the Democratic National Conference highlighting secular and democratic agenda. At the behest of Pandit Nehru, the Democratic National Conference was wound up to the detriment of the new forces emerging and unfolding with a renewed political agenda for the entire state.

Though the agitating Hindus were deadset against D.P. Dhar, yet he was not for unleashing a reign of terror against them. That fruitful dialogue directed to the resolution of the thorny problem was what he stressed and highlighted. Despite all hurdles he maintained links with the Kashmirian Pandit leadership. He could not be kept at bay like Pandit Shiv Narayan Fotedar, an accredited leader of the Kashmirian Hindus holding the chairmanship of the Legislative Council.

D.P. Dhar's constant dialogue with the Hindu agitationists was misconstrued as hbnobbing with them only to keep up the tempo of the agitation. Losing his cool and balance Mir Qasim is reported to have labelled D.P. Dhar as a communalist forgetting that the nomenclature sat well only on him and men of his ilk.

D.P. Dhar's role unto the Kashmirian Hindu community was not savoured well by most of the Hindus, who levelled many an accusation at his doors and despite it, he had to face the Muslim hatred and was more often than not subjected to mortification and scornful insolence. He ushered in a golden era in the field of education when he had the portfolio with him. It was immediately snatched away from him when he dared call an explanation from Mrs. Sajjida Zamir Shah, sister-in-law of Miss Mahmooda Ahmad Ali Shah, the virtual ruler of the state in Sadiq's time, for not allowing a Kashmirian Hindu girl to join her college despite formal government orders. The

Home Department was also snatched away from him at the behest of a near relation of G.M. Sadiq. Rooted in the hate-syndrome of the Kashmirian Hindus,' the Muslim Congressites finally led to his exit from the political scene of Kashmir only to emerge as the dazzling star in the firmament of the Indian politics. The farewell arranged in honour of D. P. Dhar in the Emporium Garden, Srinagar was the hall-mark of the Muslim hatred unto the Kashmirian Hindus of all hues. A barrage of disrespect, humiliation and contumely was let loose on him. He was denounced as an I.B. Agent as if he had been an agent of a foreign power. D. P. Dhar was made the butt of scathing criticism even by Sheikh Abdullah, who hated him the most for his integrative policies.

Mir Qasim played a treacherous role by mis-informing Mrs. Indira Gandhi about the change of heart that Sheikh and Beg had undergone. The crux of his intent was only to abdicate in favour of the secessionists, and separatists. By paving way for the Muslim vacillators, Mir Qasim identified himself with the forces of disintegration and disunity thereby destabilising the entire state fraught with tremendous perils for the total polity of India. Sheikh Abdullah and Mirza Afzal Beg never reconciled to the merger of the state with India. No autonomy as guaranteed under Article 370 could satisfy them. Their inner motivations were only to capture power willy nilly and convert it into an instrument for dissemination of secession and dis-integration by rousing and fuelling communal passions against what they called the Hindu India.

Qasim failed to measure the psyche of the two secessionists, who in their vengefulness, were out to communalise the entire polity of Kashmir leading to deeper repercussions on the Indian fabric. The process of 'normalisation' and 'democratisation' had already allowed freedom to secessionists and communalists to sneak into the state administrative setup. The Jamat-i-Islami also earned Qasim's patronage enabling it to gain political credibility by getting five seats in the legislative assembly. What ensued with the in-coming of Sheikh was total reversal of his earlier commitments to secularism, democracy equal rights for all irrespective of religious and creedal differences. Qasim termed the transfer of power as a new deal for the state.[6] What exactly came out of the deal was only fostering of regional chauvinism with perceptible overtones of communalism. The Congress as an All India Party was uprooted from the state[7] and Sheikh had

been all along opposing Sadiq and Qasim for introducing Congress into the political life of Kashmirians.

Notes and References

1. Interview with P. N. Jalali and Brij Lal Koul, two veteran communists of Kashmir and freedom fighters.
2. Government order defining the sharing of services and admissions issued by G. M. Sadiq, Minister of Education, J & K Government.
3. Interview with Rishi Dev, veteran Congress leader.
4. Interview with Prof. R.L. Thussoo.
5. *Wail of the Vale*, issued by the Hindu Action Committee.
6. *Qasim-Indira Correspondence.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. Sheikh Abdullah, *Aatish-e-Chinar.*

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Sheikh Abdullah Sows Seeds of Destruction

With the abdication of Mir Qasim, Sheikh Abdullah assumed power courtesy the Congress Legislature Party lending him unanimous support under the dictates of the Central leadership. He did not have a smooth sailing as got revealed when the Congressites kept away from Raj Bhavan dressed up for the oath-taking ceremony. The tall Sheikh felt all-time low and humiliated. But, fuelled by the fiery desire of capturing power, he resorted to a compromising posture only to weave a web of ministry out of disparate strands. Motivated by his life-long commitments to the establishment of his own fiefdom and deep-seated vengeance, the Sheikh acted in a manner prejudicial to the terms of alliance forged for strengthening the secular and cohesive forces at state and national level. With the defeat of Mrs. Gandhi at the hustings, the entire political scenario underwent a cataclysmic change. Bypassing Mrs. Gandhi's advice, the Congressites at the behest of Mufti Sayyid withdrew support to the Sheikh, who recommended dissolution of the House, thus paving way for new elections. The Sheikh as a stratagem feigned to be on death-bed and his loyalists in the disbanded Plebiscite Front drummed up tremendous support for him and his candidates in the run up to the Assembly. The Sheikh won elections with a thumping majority and took no time in embarking upon the path of transforming Kashmir into an Islamic ghetto

Having made tryst with myopic religious agenda, Sheikh Abdullah master-minded the plans for the destruction of the Hari Parbat-(Pradhuman Giri) as the spiritual centre of the Hindus. A sign-board of 'Kohi Maran' was installed at the foot-hills thereby Islamising the spiritual lore woven around the hillock through the aeons-old cultural history of Kashmir. Only to destroy the sanctity of the hillock, a huge water-tank was built at its top, a monstrosity interfering with

the scenic surroundings underscoring a deliberate intent to inflict hurt on the religious susceptibilities of the Hindus. The entire path for *parikrama* was vengefully dug out and destroyed and the earth carried to fill the Muslim *Auqaf* lands.

Despite numerous pleas and plaints, the Sheikh, supposed to have commanded heights in secular politics, never moved a bit in getting the Muslim bigots restrained from openly dismantling the walls of the plots of land attached to the *Chakreshwari* shrine on the HariParbat hillock. The law enforcing agencies in full knowledge of the nefarious acts indulged in by the vicious elements always dragged their feet in establishing rule of law. Attempts beyond count were made to grab the compound of the shrine obliging the Hindus to rent it out to a central agency. As an outcome of police neutrality and non-interference, the small tracks leading to the structures housing minor deities dotting the entire path for *parikrama* were blocked or grabbed.

The encroachments on the Hindu places of worship never abated. Despite court judgments, the Sheikh never established his secular credentials by way of resolving the Bhairav Nath Temple tangle created by the frenzied Muslims as a vital part of Islamisation campaign. The administration infected of communal virus never acted to implement the court orders with a view to restoring the possession of the temple to the Hindus, who have been deprived of their right to worship in the temple for the last 25 years.

In the wake of Indira-Sheikh accord, the popularity graph of the tall Sheikh suffered a remarkable dip. Despite victory at the hustings, there was an erosion in his credibility and sensing it he would laboriously prop it up by resorting to a strident anti-Centre policy. After it lost its utility as a route to popularity, he stuck to a religious agenda in the form of being lukewarm to the bigotted arts of laying claims to the temple properties and their forcible occupation. Flouting the award given by a Committee formed by Maharaja Hari Singh about the camping ground near the Mattan shrine, the Muslims true to their form, laid claim to it and occupied it. The Hindus of the area proved more militant than the Muslims and regained it by locking horns with the rabids. The Sheikh remained mum, did not utter a word or flourish his stick against the Muslim deviants. The flareup at Mattan in the district of Anantnag ended in communal clashes forcing the Muslimised administration to maintain the *status quo*. But, the Muslim Auqaf as the brain -child of the Sheikh grabbed the

land belonging to the Durga Nath Temple, Srinagar and made constructions thereby giving a knock to the battered citadel of secularism.

Motivated by a 'retrogressive outlook', the Sheikh having won accolades as a secularist led to the re-naming of 300 villages and *mohallas* in the region of Kashmır. The old names owing origin to the Sanskritic word-hoard were replaced by crude Islamic names couched in Persian and Arabic vocabulary. Instead of researching the basic roots of the nomenclatures and establishing their historical import, what the doyen of secularism did was to stamp out the names reminiscent of Hindu history and culture. Be it put that it was a step in the direction of transforming Kashmir into an Islamic enclave where Hindu nomenclatures are a taboo.

Brari-angan as the distorted name of *Battarika-angan* (the compound of the goddess) was replaced by Sheikhpora and what is ironical that only three Sheikh families live there. *Chandra Peetham* as the name of a locality on the outskirts of Rainawari, Srinagar is changed into *Beroon Kathi-darwaza* though the old nomenclature is popular with the local Muslims, who pronounce it with ease and facility.

A champion of 'pluralism, tolerance and equality', the Sheikh surprisingly made a truce with Jammat-i-Islami, which had been consistently pursuing the policies of bigotry and parochialism. All the Jamaat rabids were inducted into the administrative setup and had forged direct links with the family. Mohammed Shafi, a Minister in his cabinet, was a Jamaat rabid aiding and abetting the agit prop of the structure with known links with the subversive forces across the borders. When the Shiekh decided to close down the plethora of schools run by the Jamaat-i-Islami, he was stopped in his tracks by Mohmmad Shafi, who cocked a snook, thereby allowing them to poison the new budding generation. An older version of Sheikh had launched a crusade against the Jamaat fanatics, but in time the lion had lost his roar and commitment and had to call a wild wolf his brother. The Islamised bureaucracy committed to the Jamaat had left the Sheikh convinced that the Kashmirian Muslims could prosper only in a theocratic state put on the pedestal of Islamic law.

In the post-1947 era, the Sheikh was in post-haste in abolishing big landed estates without compensation to the petty landlords ostensibly to give relief to the deprived peasantry. Living down his own image, the same Sheikh owning huge orchards led to the

amendment of the Land Reforms Act of 1972 only to keep the orchards beyond the purview of any standard ceiling as stipulated in the Act, thus garnering and safe-guarding his own interests and the interests of the apple-Sheikhs. When land was to be snatched away from the Hindus, committees were formed and enactments made. But, now that the land is owned by the Muslim *kulaks*, converting the cultivable land into orchards, the Sheikh could not contribute to the measure of subjecting them to a standard ceiling and snatching the surplus land for distribution among the landless Hindus or Muslims.

Sheikh Abudllah with his diluted credentials proved very soft to *Alfateh* saboteurs, who had been operating on the soil of Kashmir only to subvert the Kashmirian polity by erecting high walls of fear and deep gorges of distrust. Ignoring their terrorist acts, court cases filed against them were unilaterally and arbitrarily withdrawn, thus allowing them free scope to mobilise anti-Indian forces for an ultimate battle. When in political wilderness, the Sheikh and his lieutenant, Mirza Afzal Beg, whom he fired for the ascendancy of his son, had been in close laison with them for the purposes of anti-Indian operations and umpteen acts of sabotage involving most of the time the Kashmirian Hindus as a weak social group.

Virtually pandering one dimensional ideology, the Sheikh sunk in his cocoon indulged in fulminations and diatribes against the Congressites who, to him, were dirty vermin in lanes, polluting the entire environs and surroundings. It appeared that the Indian National Congress that had the history of total support to the Sheikh in his sectarian battle against the Maharaja was a thorn rantling him in his side. Out to eradicate its roots, he usually in a fitful anger cautioned the Muslims against the Congress structure, thereby keeping them away from the Indian mainstream. Social boycott *(tarki-mavalat)* as an Islamic practice was resorted to against the Muslim Congressites. At his behest, the Muslims under the blinding effect of hate generated by the Sheikh refused to join the burial of the dead Muslims owing allegiance to the Congress. The same spleen was vented against the Janata Party, which had become operational in the Valley spreading out its contact base. The N.C. goons launched an operation against the Janata Party workers, raiding and pillaging their houses, bruising them and forcing them to flee their houses only to take refuge in a Muslim school. The Janata Party head-quarters was vengefully ravaged in a hurricane fashion.

There is no perceptible evidence available suggesting the

disapproval and rejection by the Sheikh of the ISI plan of Greater Kashmir, the details and contours of which were delineated with precision by the Islamised bureaucracy. The entire Doda district with dominant Muslim population was linked with Kashmir via Simthan Pass and Poonch-Rajouri belt was under way to be linked with Kashmir via Mughal Road. There have been persistent demands for allotment of funds for the construction of road-links between Kashmir and the Muslim dominated regions of Jammu. The nefarious ideology of Greater Kashmir with communal underpinnings attracted focus when a paper named *Greater Kashmir* was floated by the brother of a Muslim engineer alleged to be funded by sources across the border and presently meeting the demands of Muslim insurgency and terrorism. With a view to forging and fostering broad links and contracts with the Muslim areas of Jammu province, the Islamised bureaucracy thrust most of the Muslim officers on such areas ignoring the claims of the Jammuites. The Sheikh is reported to have lent a receptive ear to the puerile ideology of Greater Kashmir though the fact remains that he was more interested in the Valley than other areas falling in the Jammu belt.

That the National Conference politics was stenchy became perceptible when a ring of Muslim colonies was laid out to surround the city of Jammu dominated by the Hindus. The designs smacking of bigotry and intolerance are said to have been conceived and executed by Sheikh Abdullah himself. The colonies patterned on communal lines came up as Muslim colonies. Ostensibly these were laid out for backward class Gujjars, but are inhabited by all classes of Muslims. These colonies as such have proved sanctuaries for the Muslim terrorists to fan out and organise acts of sabotage and terrorism designed to engulf the major areas of Jammu belt in communal conflagration and ethnic strife. The poor and deprived Hindus forming a weaker section were never on the policy projections of the Sheikh. The Gaddies as the tribesmen of the hilly terrains of Jammu region were not considered for any such relief for the plain fact that they are the adherents of Hindu faith. Exhibiting a pro-Muslim tilt, the Sheikh was categoric in his jottings on the file that the Gujjars were to be armed, but not the Hindu Gaddies, thus speaking volumes for his mind.

As a prelude to Muslim insurgency, body-building materials worth lakhs were reportedly recovered from a class-room in the state high school, now burnt by the terrorists, in downtown of Srinagar by the

principal of the institution. The matter was reported to the police authorities who prepared the inventory of the goods, all of foreign make. On the express instructions of the Sheikh, the Director of Sports was reportedly made to own the goods and the matter stood hushed up. The materials stuffed in the school building were fruitfully used by the prospective terrorists for gaining agility and nimbleness to meet the requirements of terrorism. Having been trapped by ISI subversives, the prospective terrorists were imparted basics in the very playground of the said institution.

To cap it all, the Resettlement Bill as a measure of instability and insecurity was introduced in the legislature to pave the way for the Muslims of Pak-occupied Kashmir to re-settle in Kashmir by occupying their landed and structural properties which some Hindus and Sikh refugees have occupied. The Bill was mischievous in intent and content and was designed to flare up turbulence and turmoil leading to the destabilisation of the state. Measuring the implicit perils ensuing from the implementation of the Bill, the leaders of major political parties in the country characterised it as a danger to overall security of the State. The pro-Sheikh Governor, B.K. Nehru, stalled the Bill by withholding his formal assent.

Disregarding a coherent perspective for evaluating historical processes, distortions were initiated only to feed the ends of Muslim bigotry and myopia. Islamic perspectives and hate-India objectives were devised to project the Mughals, the Afghans, the Sikhs and the Dogras as foreign oppressors impinging on the independent status of the Kashmirian polity. The Sayyids as oppressors were not evaluated nor was the Chak rule put to critical studies. The role-conduct of some Kashmirian Hindus connected with the Mughal, Afghan and Dogra courts was used as a ploy to characterise the total community of Hindus as oppressors of the general mass of neo-converts to Islam. That the Muslim rulers ruled Kashmir for six hundred years without raising the quality and worth of life of the Muslim masses was put out of focus as a matter of deliberate design. The Chaks as per the distortionists were great natives who fought the Mughals and their hegemony. But who invited the Mughals to terminate the Chak rule is smokescreened. Birbal Dhar was a renegade for the fact that he went to the Sikh Court to redeem Kashmir from the Afghan savagery. But Mir Muquim Kanth as one inviting the Afghan boors adhering to the Islamic faith was a saviour. The same distortion is upheld by the Sheikh in his autobiography which generated hatred against

the Kashmirian Hindus. The positive and sterling contributions made by the Kashmirian Hindus to the total polity of Kashmir have gone out of his mind. That the Kashmirian Hindus are a 'fifth columan' proved a prelude to the training of guns against them for ethnic cleansing.

The Cultural Academy as a statutory body placed under the charge of a literate ignoramus strenuously worked to the end of propagating the Islamic contributions to the history and culture of Kashmir at the expense of the Hindu contributions which have undoubtedly been vast and varied. Divisive and myopic trends were fostered and strengthened to feed the Islamisation campaign to bring about a liatus in the continuity of Kashmir history embracing varied trends and influences to shape out a comprehensive scenario.

Driven by intolerance and religious prejudice, the Sheikh led to the establishment of the Muslim Auqaf in Jammu to lay its tentacles on government land and custodian properties. Such an act of the Sheikh caused a steep slide in his popularity in the Hindu dominated region of Jammu.

With a view to eliminating the Buddhist sway over the entire Laddakh belt, the Sheikh jerrymandered the region into two separate districts of Leh and Kargil, one dominated by the Buddhists and the other by the Shia-Muslims, thus demolishing the bridges that had been joining the two diverse faiths. The bifurcation of the entire region was motivated by religious considerations ignoring all canons of race, stock and culture. Leaving the Ladakhis completely at the mercy of Muslim bigots, the government presided over by the Sheikh led to the virtual closure of the Department of Ladakh Affairs functioning in the secretariat. The presence of a son of the soil in his cabinet failed to heal the wound of neglect that had been inflicted on the Ladakhis. Their tryst with freedom was a tryst with pain, neglect and ruthless exploitation. The longstanding demand of the Ladakhi Buddhists for establishment of a college in Leh was never met, thus perpetuating their backwardness and illiteracy levels.

As a sheer act of vengefulness, the Sheikh in pursuit of myopic agenda led to the jerymandering of the constituencies where the Kashmirian Hindus had a role for political assertion. The localities of Rainawari, Habbakadal and Karan Nagar in the city of Srinagar were fragmented to bits only to reduce them as tiny and insignificant parts of Muslim dominated constituencies thereby depriving the miniscule minority of Hindus to elect a single representative of their

choice and will. It will be pertinent to put that the fragile community of the Hindus was represented by a legislator who was vociferous in his support of the retrograde politics of National Conference and blatant discrimination of the Hindus.

Sheikh Abdullah and his lieutenant Mirza Afzal Beg maligned Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad for seeping corruption into the Kashmirian fabric. But the Sheikh failed to curb his lieutenant, who openly encouraged the Muslim cultivators to cultivate *charas* for sale to the underworld. Wedded to Islam, he was expected to vigorously fight the propagation of such a pernicious and unethical proclivity gripping the neo-rich Muslim peasantry. Confined to an ivory tower, he allowed the state machine to work as a hand-maid of all manner of corruption thereby tearing apart the moral fibre of the Kashmirian society. The Muslim youth undergoing educative processes were the first to catch the malaise and kept away from the institutions only to get involved in the processes of cultivation and sale of *charas*. It was the first step to immoralise and brutalise the Muslim mind.

Steeped in the hate Hindu syndrome, Sheikh Abdullah as the Chief Minister of J&K State pounced on the miniscule minority of the Hindus. His speech to the Muslim officers of the Secretariat for edging out Hindus is said to have shocked even those Muslims, who should have hailed it. The doors of the state services were completely closed for them. He personally perused each list of candidates for employment and erased the names of Hindu boys and girls with his own pen. The non-recruitment of the Hindus to the state services after 1975 is a testimony to the policy of herding them out of their native land. Ignoring and discarding the academic achievements, the Sheikh clung to the resolution of the Plebiscite Front stipulating population as the basic criterion for recruitment to services. The Hindu brights were kept at bay by the communal policy of the government favouring the Muslims and hunting the Hindus. The Sheikh was cruel in disregarding the claims of late Moti Lal Misri's daughter to a medical seat though she was a first divisoner and top freedom fighter's daughter.

CHPATER FIFTEEN

Farooq Abdullah : The Main Culprit

After the demise of Sheikh Abdullah, it was his son, Farooq Abdullah, who took over as the helmsman of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The struggle for power within the National Conference was virtually stifled when Mrs. Indira Gandhi through her personal intervention cleared the decks for Farooq to take over the mantle of his father. Sheikh Abdullah had already declared him as his heir by investing him with the presidentship of the National Conference. Farooq would have faced tough opposition from forces within the organisation had Mrs. Gandhi not set the stage for his mid-night coronation. And thus began the saga of precipitous disaster for the state.

Farooq was leagues away from politics. Lacking in depth and maturity, his story in politics was abominable . Though he was the son of Sheikh Abdullah, yet he was not taken very seriously by all hues of people. Before entering the political scene of Kashmir, he had lived for a considerable period in London, where he had formed, not tenuous, but firm links with some prominent secessionist organisations operating on the soil of Britain. The chief among such organisations was the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front.[1] Having formed clandestine links with the leaders of such outfits, Farooq seemed bent upon wreaking revenge on the Indian leaders who had wronged his father. There are authentic reports available establishing Farooq's contacts, may be clandestine, with Amanullah Khan, Hashim Qureshi and Maqbool Butt.[2]

It is well known that Farooq Abdullah paid a visit to Pakistan and Pak-occupied Kashmir.[3] It was not a freak. But he was said to be on a purposeful mission. During the period of his sojourn in Pakistan, he was reported to have been tutored and regimented to the entire modalities of the action-plan for liberating Kashmir from the clutches of India. The plan though at a formative stage was said

to have been well received by Farooq. He was said to have expressed his solidarity and commitment to the cause of liberating Kashmir as sponsored and pioneered by outfits basking in the patronage of Pakistan Government. Farooq's secret meeting with Sikander Hayat Khan and Mrs. Benazir Bhutto earned lots of media attention.[4]

Farooq proved as sly as a fox. Keeping his cards close to his chest, he systematically aided the processes of Islamisation as were chalked out by the Islamised bureaucracy having established close links with Jammat-i-Islami and other communal elements with a vast net-work of *Madrasas* (Islamic schools) working for regimentation and hate-India campaign. He continued to pay lip-service to secularism and democracy. He parroted the notes of Kashmir's accession to India and at national level maintained a secular and democratic stance. He resorted to this cunning only to subvert the entire polity of Kashmir allowing the canker of communalism and sectarianism to take firm roots.[5] He wore the secular and democratic mask only to conceal his real identity.[6] Not unlike his father, Farooq had deep-seated commitments to 'Independent Kashmir', which is co-terminus with annexation of Kashmir to Pakistan. The commitments he had to the Liberation Front and many other outfits sponsoring terrorism were cunningly masked by his zestful contacts with the Congress hierarchy designed to throw dust into their eyes. 'One may smile and smile and yet be a villian', is a quotable adage.

Farooq Abdullah caused a big jolt to the politics of Kashmir when he bridged the gulf between the nationalists and pro-Pak forces led by Molvi Farooq, killed by the Muslim terrorists. There was not even a single voice of dissent against Farooq's move. The followers of Molvi Farooq were traditionally stigmatised as the *Bakras*, the goats as they had opposed the secular and nationalist agenda of the National Conference. That the National Conference revived by Sheikh Abdullah after dissolving Plebiscite Front had already parted ways with secular and democratic politics was proved to the hilt when no dissenting voice was raised against the move. All this was done only to establish and strengthen the Muslim fraternity. The Indian media reacted by characterising the entire development as capitulation to communal forces and dilution of secular and democratic politics in Kashmir. The 'Double-Farooq' bridgeup formally destroyed the bonafides of National Conference as a party subscribing to the commitment of Kashmir's accession to India and more than most to secularism and pluralism. The Muslims having

been proud of aligning themselves with *Shers* (lions – followers of Sheikh Abdullah) were led to part ways with the secular and pluralistic agenda only to get sunk into the quagmire of communal politics based on Muslim brotherhood and seccssionism. If Sheikh Abdullah could be said to have diluted the identity of the *Shers*, Farooq Abdullah formalised the dilution and destruction by an open nexus with the notorious anti-Indian and sectarian forces.

The 'Double Farooq' bridge-up was not a sudden development but the logical end-product of a process already begun by forces across the border in complete collaboration with Farooq and his cohorts. The blue-print for a pogrom of subversion and secession was already drawn in full details and it was being systematically and clandestinely worked out. Farooq provided cover to the entire gamut of terrorism in Kashmir and worked as a collaborator committed to shield the terrorists from the state power pouncing on them and stifling them. Camps had already been set up designed to impart training to the terrorists. The Pakistan Government with its key intelligence agencies was involved in sponsoring camps and imparting training to the Kashmirian youth. Taking advantage of the porous border, deliberately left without vigil, perhaps to feed the narcotic trade, the Kashmirian Muslims had started the process of going to the camps for getting training in automatic weaponry and other hi-fi armaments.

The processes of infiltration started gaining momentum. The top terrorists leading various outfits had already been infiltrating and ex-filtrating for purposes of establishing their net-work on the soil of Kashmir and more than most for political direction and guidance. What was the role of Farooq Abdullah ? He being aware of the processes of infiltration slept over it as if nothing had been happening . The agencies operating for purposes of internal security conveyed the danger signals, but were dismissed as bullshit. What was ominous for the future of Kashmir was that the trained terrorists found their way into the police forces and administrative setup and were provided a shield by the Islamised bureaucracy, which essentially abetted the pogrom of secessionism and subversion. Sheikh Abdullah had been lukewarm to such elements. But his collaboration got testified when he released thirty anti-nationals, who had been involved in matters of subversion and terrorism. Farooq Abdullah was said to be an important cog in the entire game-plan charted out by Pakistan.

The pro-Pakistan subversives had perceptibly spread out their

tentacles. A complete hartal was observed on 26th January, 1984 pinpointing the trend that was in the process of shaping. Arms had already been dumped. The local intelligence working at grassroot level was ceasing to be the conduit for culling and conveying of clues to the developing situation. The political organisations did not exhibit the will to fight out the emerging challenges. Jammat-i-Islami, People's League, People's Conference and Mahaz-i-Azadi were in the vanguard of sponsoring subversion, sabotage and anti-Indian campaign. The communally charged cassettes of Ali Shah Geelani of Jamaat-i-Islami and Maqbool Bhutt of Liberation Front were put to sale only to mobilise the Muslims for the impending battle.[7]

The ominous developments with sufficient indications of an impending armed struggle shaped out under the very nose of Farooq Abdullah. Not that the state administration could not have met the challenges, but it acted as a model of non-governance, conniving at and acquiescing in, allowing the saboteurs to dig their roots deep into the polity of Kashmir. Terrorist outfits 'Zia Tigers' and *Al Jang* unfurled their banner of revolt proclaiming a clear-cut agenda of subversion and secessionism. A discernible spurt in the renovation and construction of mosques provided clues to the importance they were going to assume in the dissemination of religious propaganda designed to cause an upswing to the entire agenda of subversion and mayhem. The *Molvis* and *Mullahs* of a fanatical breed hailing from West Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh were spewing out venom only to spread out the base of religious hatred serving as a launching pad for waging *Jehad* (holy war) designed to usher in the 'Prophet's governance' – *Nizam-e-Mustafa.*

A massive network of the Muslim organisations operating under religious cover had considerably succeeded in poisoning the Muslim mind. Such organisations operating at grass-root level enjoyed considerable patronage from the Islamised bureaucracy, which cornered maximum gains for itself out of the Indian booty, but played treachery by patronising anti-Indian forces visualising a safe haven for itself under the umbrella of Muslim fundamentalism. With Jamaat-i-Islami, Ahl-i-Hadis, Students League, and Islamic Study circle *et al* had been operating to aid and quicken the processes for the establishment of an Islamic state. A plethora of schools like Iqbal Memorial and Jamaat-run *Madrasas* wreaked havoc with young budding minds by sowing seeds of religious hatred and discord in them at an impressionable age. The government run institutions were

no better and upheld the same agenda for religious war. Most of the rabidly communal organisations were manned by college lecturers and school teachers drawing salaries from public exchequer.[8]

That Farooq Abdullah was in complete collaboration with the communally oriented terrorist outfits turned out to be an open reality when he released 70 hard-core terrorists detained for sabotage and terrorism. It was done under a fake and un-convincing argument of providing them with a breathing space for rehabilitation only to join mainstream. Objectively, the terrorists thus let off never looked back and added new chapters to the book of subversion, sabotage and secession. With a spurt in terrorism, the government in a bid to lay its hands on them found them having melted away into various hide-outs in areas dominated by the Muslims.[9]

The cricket match between India and the West Indies held at Amar Singh Club, Srinagar was converted into a scene for anti-Indian demonstration. The regimented Muslim youth held aloft the Pak-flags chanting anti-Indian slogans. Only to disrupt the mach, the youth dug out the pitch reducing the field to a state of chaos and mayhem. The Indian players were hooted and subjected to a barrage of abuse and contumely and the West Indian players were given a big hand to boost up their morale. It came as a surprise to the tourist team.

It happened despite massive police *bundo-bast*. How did the disruptionists sneak into the stadium? How were they allowed to work against the national prestige ? The fact of the matter was that the disrupters had pre-planned preparations for such demonstrations and all happened in presence of Farooq Abdullah, the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir State. The police forces being a party to it had already been in the grip of anti-Indian sentiments, all out to wreck Kashmir's accession to India. The cricket match turning into an anti-India demonstrations and the police forces present on the scene not acting earned Farooq Abdullah political mileage at the local level, throwing away, to boot many signals over to the real planners wherever they had been. Despite police connivance, some arrests only as an eye-wash were made and at Farooq Abdullah's behest the arrested persons were released only to establish his collaboration with the forces out to destroy Kashmir.

Just after assuming power in 1982 Farooq Abdullah contemptuously dismissed the ministers in Sheikh Abdullah's cabinet. Most of the ministers were not a maleable material as would be

moulded the way Farooq intended to mould them. Deriding them publicly, they lost face only gearing up for political vengeance. The plea for dismissing the entire set of ministers as set forth by Farooq was that they had an 'unflattering reputation'. But the pith of the intent was that he planned to induct such people into his cabinet as were his brand only, toeing his line of creating conditions leading to the snapping of links with India and also fuelling communal fires sealing the fate of the Hindu minorities in Kashmir. Be it said that he was stated to be programmed for each step and his express intent was to widen the chasm between Kashmir and India, not to bridge it up. At every step and in every move, he smacked of bad intentions and evil motives. Did he really narrow the differences between Delhi and Kashmir ? History has a capital 'No' for it.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi, who had personally supervised Farooq Abdullah's mid-night coronation, was stunned when the National Conference as the ruling party clandestinely arranged for a bandh when she was scheduled to address a public meeting at Iqbal Park, Srinagar. The day of her visit was observed as a black day and in some areas there were violent black flag demonstrations. The National Conference having parted its ways with secular and democratic agenda appeared ready for a confrontation leaving its baneful impact on the mass mind. The goons had sealed all entry points leading to Iqbal Park and the charismatic personality of Mrs. Gandhi still drew a considerable crowd. Most of the Kashmirian Hindus were beaten and humiliated. The old men had to run for their lives leaving behind their shoes and turbans, to cap it all, the National Conference workers, call them goons, deprived of political ideology and direction, resorted to the exhibition of nudity only to rebuff and humiliate the Prime Minister of India. It will be pertinent to put that the National Conference in its essentials was only a party of goons and toughs and it were the Hindu intellectuals owing allegiance to the Communist Party and other radical groups, who invested the organisation with political direction and ideology, thus taming the brute in the organisation.

A seminar on 'Identity of Kashmir' was held in the hall of S.P. College, Srinagar on 13th of August 1983. It was a government sponsored seminar. Farooq Abdullah prior to the holding of the seminar had privately discussed the issue at his residence with the so-called Muslim intellectuals having crept into the university departments, effacingly devoted to the task of distorting the history

and culture of Kashmir and extolling the advent of Islam into Kashmir and fixing it as the period of commencement of civilisational and cultural processes in Kashmir ignoring the role-profile of Hindu Kashmir in shaping the full course of civilisational and cultural processes. The seminar was mischievously timed and the main objective of the seminar was only to chart out the course of secessionism, separatism and disintegration by highlighting and stressing the Muslim identity of Kashmir. The National Conference under the leadership of Farooq Abdullah had already worked havoc with the democratic and pluralist agenda, which as a result of combination of many forces within the organisation was upheld only for expediency. The seminar exposed the inner motivations of the leadership, which had given a go-by to all the commitments to non-sectarian approach and premis to the issues of politics and culture.

The seminar on 'Identity of Kashmir' was an official proclamation of hate-India campaign and inaugural of a secessionist movement. The papers read out highlighted the monotonous theme that the Muslims had a distinct identity which if eroded or subjected to an onslaught (obviously from Hindu India) was destined to end up in disastrous consequences. Farooq Abdullah absolutely lacking indepth study of the civilisational and cultural history of Kashmir with its close links with the entire civilisational and cultural processes in the Indian sub-continent talked of Muslim identity in sectarian terms and his real intent was to question the historicity of accession of Kashmir to India stressing a full scale discussion on it. Shahab-ud-din with his known credentials expressed his solidarity with a movement for the preservation of the Muslim identity. The veteran leader, Maulan Masoodi, killed by the Muslim terrorists, in his presidential address counselled caution and restraint. He was endowed with sufficient scholarship as to realise that the bogey of identity was raised to serve myopic ends ignoring the deep ramifications ensuing from it.

Farooq Abdullah was highlighting a different agenda involving the Muslims of Kashmir alone. What about the different ethnic groups inhabiting the territory of Jammu and Kashmir ?

There are Hindu minorities, who have an equal right to maintain their identity ? There are Sikhs, though small in numbers, clamouring for the preservation of their identity. There are the Buddhists in Ladakh and Kargil, who have their definite contours of identity. How was it deemed that the Muslims alone had their identity? Was the Muslim identity in danger? If at all there were dangers, those needed

be pinpointed. The real danger to the Muslim identity was the Muslim bureaucracy, which settled for Urdu as the official language of the state thereby undermining the Kashmiri language. The deficient Persian script for the Kashmiri language as chosen by the same bureaucracy failed to gain popularity as it is unscientific lacking in symbols which could represent many typical Kashmiri sounds. The Sharda script suited to the tone, temper and nuances of the local language, though indigenous, was dismissed for myopic reasons. 'Language is the root of all identity and to tamper with it is treason or poetry.' The Kashmirian culture and language have an indelible mark of Hindu contributions, which even the highly regimented and biased Muslims cannot weed out. See what will happen to Kashmiri language if Lal Ded, shiva Yogini, is dropped from the language only to preserve the Muslim identity. Can Nund Rishi with his Hindu thought content orienting and structuring the aeons old rishi ethos of Kashmir be deleted from the annals of Kashmiri heritage and value structure ? The Muslim identity is a myth and if at all it contains a meaning, it is interwoven with the Hindu strands, which prominently stand out the total texture and scenario. It is to be viewed and assessed in the backdrop of totality of Kashmirian history of cultur and civilisation. It cannot be sectarian and communal identity as conceived by Farooq and his cohorts.

The Muslim intelligentsia in its laboured attempts miserably failed to highlight the main theme of the Muslim identity. Did the rulers in Kashmir at the behest of the Central Government resort to the measure of demolishing mosques or stopping the Muslims from saying prayers ? Instead there was a terrific spurt in the construction of mosques and the Muslims usually blocked roadtraffic by using roadspaces to say prayers. Did any quarter question the sectarian act of giving timber worth 77,000 rupees free of cost to the Hazratbal Shrine when it was in the process of Arab-style renovation dealing out a death blow to the indigenous architectural style in vogue for aeons. Was there a ban imposed on the peaceful propagation of Islam in Kashmir ? It is not understandable as to how Farooq Abdullah conceived the notion that the Muslim identity was in danger.

It can be said with great authenticity that the Muslims endangered the identities of other ethnic groups. There are more than 108 places of Hindu worship which are under the Muslim onslaught. The Muslims have failed to throw up liberals who, notwithstanding court verdicts, could have settled the tangle of Bhairava Nath Temple in Srinagar.

The Auqaf Trust under the patronage of the rulers that be has been grabbing government lands and the lands belonging to the Hindus. The temples inside various localities have been brought out to the public gaze by opening out new roads resulting in their desecration and persistent demolition by the Muslim intolerants. The path for *Parikrama* round the hari parbat hillock was dug out. The Buddhists were subjected to the campaigns of proselytisation till they revolted. Yet Farooq Abdullah clamoured that the Muslim identity was in danger. In fact, it was a finer way of saying that Islam was in danger and it is and has ever been the lethal slogan of the Muslim bigots bent upon raising religious frenzy for ulterior motives.

An onslaught on the history of Kashmir was launched under a well articulated plan. The Hindu past of Kashmir was distorted only to present it as a panorama of dismal and dark events with no contributions to make. The Muslim period was extolled as a glorious period dispelling the dark period for all times to come. The Muslim method of writing history, to be fair, is not dispassionate and disinterested but is surely based on glorification of all acts for proselytisation even though brutal and tyrannous. A perusal of the Persian chronicles as recorded by the Muslims testifies to the same. *Baharistan-i-Shahi* as a model of Muslim chronicling is unequivocal in presenting the role of the Muslim rulers leading to the genocide of the Kashmirian Hindus as highly laudable. The Central Asian Studies centre working under the aegis of the University of Kashmir was assiduously in quest of Central Asian influences on Kashmir ignoring that Kashmir was the first to humanise the Central Asians. Forgetting that history in general shapes out as a result of currents and cross-currents, and their inter-mingling, a pernicious attempt was made to discredit the indigenous levels of culture and civilisation. What made them myopic was that they tried to see the whole course of history through a pigeon-hole lens. Be it said that the Muslims have a history of six hundred years only in Kashmir and the Hindus have a history of 5000 years, which only an ignoramus can ignore and overlook and that, too at his own peril.

What was tragic was that men with no grounding in the history and culture of Kashmir endeavoured to ventilate their mis-conceived notions on such subjects. Dr. Stein, a world famous archaeologist and man of erudition, was ridiculed as to have rated and extolled Kalhan as a great historio-grapher. Such a view by an ignoramus recipient of Padma Shree, was expressed in '*Vaad*', a monthly later

a quarterly in Kashmiri language. Attempts were made to trace the etymologies of some place-names in Kashmir giving a life-time shock to the scholarly circles as they ignored linguistic principles and were absurd and meaningless. Prof. M.L. Koul blasted the entire structure of etymologies bordering on absurdity by writing four articles dilating on the origins of the place names, which are essentially rooted in the Sanskritic word-hoard.[10] The same trend of discrediting the scholars, who worked on the history and culture of Kashmir, was pursued.

The Cultural Academy in its Encyclopaedia has offered some stunning treatment to some prominent places with a hoary past. Anantnag as the district headquarters in south of Kashmir continues to be the name in revenue records. But Muslims call it by the name of Islamabad and official Encyclopaedia has devoted more space to Islamabad than that of Anantnag. Could it be dismissed as a stray act ? Has Islamabad something more to offer than what was already in Anantnag? This trend of Islamisation assiduously adhered to was carried on under a systematic treatment. Absurd attempts to trace the origins of Kashmiri language to Arabic and other Semitic languages were resorted to only to create a mindset for an ultimate crusade to be launched upon in the puppet theatre of Kashmir.

What Farooq Abdullah in his first stint as the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir State did unto the polity of Kashmir was a total divide between the two major communities, Islamisation pogrom taken to its full-length limits, and patronisation of subversion, sabotage and secession. A nexus between the state power and the forces of Islamisation was perceptibly visible.

Following the foot-prints of his father, Farooq Abdullah worked consistently for the disintegration of the country by collaborating and aligning with subversive forces spearheading secessionist agenda.[11] The bona fides of such subversive and disruptive forces were patently clear as they had been working out the formulations of a neighbouring country harbouring visceral hatred against India. Prior to the Operation Blue Star, he happened to meet Sant Jarnail Signh Bhindranwala,[12] who had identified himself with divisive forces aided and abetted by Pakistan only to deflect the Sikhs from the path of patriotism and humanism.

The motivating intent of such a meeting was well within the ken of all. It was just to chart out a course of alliance with disruptive and antinational forces designed to provide them facilities for fanning

out their operational base. As a result of nexus between Farooq and the Punjab terrorists, six training camps to train the new recruits were allowed to operate on the soil of Jammu and Kashmir. What game Farooq Abdullah was playing ? Whose game was he playing ? He was accused of openly playing into the hands of those to whom he was committed. He was already drawn into the dragnet of the forces inimical to the solidarity and integrity of the country. To all intents and purposes, he was a collaborator of the plan-formulations designed to break up the country.

The secessionist agenda formed an essential part of the election campaign. The fact remains that the National Conference leadership was wont to raise a bogey of encroachment on the quantum of autonomy granted under Article 370.[13] But 1984 elections were entirely different and the election posters underlined a different theme, exhorting the Kashmirians to continue their struggle for so-called freedom as symbolised by the 'plough' and ward off the yoke of slavery. That they were massacred by the cruel Indians and their innocent girls were put to spears by the enemies surrounding them formed the thematic substance of many a poster. It was all hate-India campaign preparing the Kashmirian Muslims for an impending battle. That India was hell and he did not want to see it was the usual fulmination he would resort to as a part of his strategy to distancc the Muslims away from the Indian mainstream.

Farooq's castigations against his father were more significant than many other acts he resorted to. Sheikh Abdullah, to him, appeared simple and honest and that was what made him to suffer the Indian brutalities prepetraed on his person. He wanted him to be sly and cunning and retaliate by the demolition of the entire edifice that had emerged after 1947 developments. Losing his cool, he would threaten to assume the role of Jinnah. His indications were more than clear that he was going to devastate the entire secular fabric and wreck the ties of Kashmir with that of India. Crafty and dubious, he proved the wrecker of Kashmir by allowing the Pak-trained terrorists to fan out, mobilise and consolidate their ground position. In Identity Seminar, Maulana Masoodi had cautioned him that by re-opening the accession issue, he was 'playing with fire'. But, he knew no restraint and went on with his diatribes against India, which he considered hell and did not want to see it.

Without looking back, Farooq Abdullah went ahead with the re-introduction of the Re-settlement Bill in the state legislature. It had

the same objective of heightening the communal tensions by inviting the Muslims of Pak-occupied Kashmir to come to the state only to occupy their landed and structural properties, which in some cases were occupied by the Hindu and Sikh refugees. The Muslim-orientation of Farooq Abdullah motivated him to re-settle the Muslims in their native land, but never bothered about the Hindu and Sikh refugees who had lost all such properties in Pakistan. Their fate is hanging fire and are denied all political and constitutional rights as are conferred upon the citizens of the country. The strategy devised by the Plebiscite Fronters masquerading as nationalists and carried on by Farooq Abdullah was only to heighten communal tension and conflict thereby opening up the secessionist agenda with a renewed vigour.

The role that Farooq Abdullah played in the politics of Kashmir can be safely characterised as that of a traitor. Pakistan fought three wars to wrest Kashmir, but was vanquished every time. But she achieved its objective of hijacking the people of Kashmir only with the express support of Farooq Abdullah. Secession was sponsored at the governmental level with the open support of the Islamised bureaucracy committed to the communal and divisive agenda of Jamaat-i-Islami. Intelligence net-work was coerced to collaborate. Some top Muslim police officers with the bright record of fighting Pakistan machinations were silenced. Their reports about the developing situation were consigned to the dustbin. Attempts were made on their lives through the terrorists initially operating in Ladakh under the guise of Sikhs.

The Valley was in the process of getting infested with terrorism and the Chief Minister was playing truant by keeping away from the Capital. His absolute neglect of the state affairs was deliberate, though criminal. He reduced the state machinery to a heap of ruins, with its muscles crippled and dead. The authority of the state was waning, throwing ample indications of disappearance. The terrorists were consolidating, gaining ground, organising their net-work and flexing their muscles for the impending battle. Acts of sabotage were ever on an increase.

Farooq Abdullah through his political chicanery sealed the fate of Kashmirian minorities. His speeches in Hindu dominated localities were venomous, communal and charged with vengeance. The instability and insecurity of the minorities touched all time high. With the state ship in a drift, the Islamised bureaucracy strait-jacketed

them denying them the basic right to live. The Kashmirian Hindus were targeted, looted, abused and neglected.

The Kashmirian Hindus were drawn into a vortex of crisis, insecurity and instability. Their entry into the service slots was practically blocked by all fraudulent ways. The brights as usual were discriminated and there were writ petitions galore challenging the validity of selections based on sectarian and communal criteria.

Farooq celebrating his victory with his goons in an open jeep stopped at Ganpatyar Temple, Srinagar creating an atmosphere of fear and panic when the entire locality was pelted at and a barrage of abuse let loose on the Kashmirian Hindus.

Notes and References

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3. *Ibid.*
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5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. Prof. Asraf Saraf, now in *POK* and Prof. Abdul Gani were dismissed from the state services for pursuing pro-Pak politics by Jagmohan, the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir.
9. Jagmohan, *My Frozen Turbulence.*
10. Prof. M.L. Koul, "In Defence of Kalhan," published in *Daily Excelsior,* Jammu.
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CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Ghulam Mohammad Shah – Loot of February 1986

Farooq Abdullah lost his power when his brother-in-law, Ghulam Mohammad Shah, established his credentials of enjoying majority support in the Legislature.[1] He was an inefficient Chief Minister,[2] who only took Kashmir to the brink of disaster by fuelling secessionist and divisive fires, polarising the entire polity on communal lines and harassing the minorities. Ghulam Mohammad Shah given to temper tantrums was not well received by the Islamised bureaucracy, which was well entrenched with deeper commitments. Shah spent most of his time in coercing the Muslim bureaucracy into subjugation only to establish his full sweep over it. His desperate attempts to make the bureaucracy accountable proved disastrous for him resulting in his absolute unpopularity with the Muslims manning the governmental machine.

Ghulam Mohammad Shah in the same line of the Muslim leaders ultimately stuck to an Islamic agenda of constructing a mosque within the premises of Jammu secretariat. The opinion leaders in Jammu did not savour it well and felt hurt and inflammed. A Hindu organisation sponsored an agitational programme against the Chief Minister's sinister move. There were protests and hartals. Effigies of the Chief Minister were hatefully burnt thereby ventilating their deep-set anger against him for his blatant communalism. Ghulam Mohammad Shah got unnerved in face of the massive protests from all sections of people in Jammu. The move initiated by him was only to gain popularity with the Muslims of all hues and thus emerging as their saviour.

Uncouth in his behaviour and invested with rough edges, Shah talked patent communalism to a delegation of the Hindus resenting the construction of a mosque inside the government secretariat. Without mincing words, he said, "I am a fanatic Muslim. I say prayers

five times a day. It is the right of every Muslim that he be allowed to pray five times a day. Hence it is necessary that there should be a mosque within the government office."[3]

The fanatic attitude of the Chief Minister was sufficient to generate massive protests against him. In his capacity as the helmsman of the state, he was expected to maintain communal peace and amity and that formed his constitutional obligation and responsibility. Instead throwing all secular and just norms to winds, he resorted to the religious agenda only to gain the sympathies of the Muslims, who hated him the most.

What shocked Shah and more than most the Islamised bureaucracy was that the Hindus of Jammu removed the mosque. And that prepared the ground for loot and plunder of the Kashmirian Hindus.

It was on 20th February, 1986 that Ghulam Mohammad Shah reached Srinagar, which was rocked by massive demonstrations against the unlocking of the Ram Janambhoomi Temple throwing it open to the Hindus for worship. It had touched their raw nerve. They yelled that Islam was in danger. The Kashmirian Hindus had to face the worstever harassment and intimidation. As if it were not enough, a new conspiracy was hatched against them by floating a rumour that all mosques in Jammu had been destroyed and not fewer than two hundred Muslims had been massacred and bus-loads of dead bodies were on way to Srinagar.

The worst role for the dissemination of unfounded rumours was played by the Islamised bureaucracy with police personnel manning the whole campaign. The rumours were carried into the remotest of the villages and hamlets designed to the extermination of the Hindus. Shah as the helmsman of the state taking shelter under the protective wings of the Islamised bureaucracy well fathomed the strength of it. The upsurge that was deliberately generated by the state power was used as a rehearsal for the communal holocaust and carnage that were already on cards.

The cumulative product of the rumours was the instantaneous mobilisation of the Muslims of all hues against the Kashmirian Hindus. Anti-national elements and secessionists were the first to get mobilised raising the usual bogey of 'Islam in danger.' 'Pakistan Zindabad' rent the skies. Every Muslim was gearing up for waging a war on a fragile minority.

As the situation was developing, Mufti Mohammad Sayyid[4] as

the provincial Congress chief felt lured to fish in troubled waters. He perceived it as a god-send opportunity to fuel the communal fires leading to the dismissal of the Shah Ministry and thus brightening up the chances for his taking over as the Chief Minister of the state. Qazi Nissar, a protege of Mufti Mohammad Sayyid, played a frontal role in the Muslim mobilisation against the Hindus. The Congressites in the entire district of Anantnag were equally cruel to the Hindus in matters of looting, plundering and burning their material properties and religious places of worship. The formidable Muslim combine forgetting their political persuasions and sinking their differences started on a looting and burning spree, ravaging village after village. The looters were led by leaders of all complexions. Political affiliations did not divide their ranks and what held them together as a solid mass for a unified action was the faith of Islam sanctioning their war on infidels *(kafirs)*. The Kashmirian Hindus as hapless and terrorised victims to loot, plunder and arson rang up the police stations for assistance and protection but there was no response. The entire drama of destruction and loot was stage-managed by the Islamised bureaucracy with police as its vital cog. As a matter of design, the state authority disappeared from the scene in a jiffy and law-enforcing agencies proved a party to the loot and plunder of the Hindus. It was a rehearsal of one act of the drama of death and destruction conceived and scripted by the demon of Muslim bigotry presiding over the Muslim psyche.

The government only as an eye-wash imposed curfew in some areas. It was only to deter the Muslim looters from looting, destroying and plundering the material properties of the Hindus and burning their temples. But what was stunning that the police never enforced curfew restrictions and maximum damage was inflicted on the victims during curfew hours. The looters moving in wave after wave faced no resistance from the law-enforcing authorities. The Kashmirian Hindus suffering the worst-ever atrocities fled their homes only to take shelter in open fields leaving their properties to the Muslim hordes for loot, plunder and arson.

The looters were fully equipped. They carried lethal arms only to kill the Hindus had they dared offer resistance. They carried inflammable materials like petrol and kerosene for burning of Hindu houses and Hindu temples. It was an open loot and arson committed on the Hindus. Could it be called a riot as the Hindus were not in the picture at all ? They fled their homes leaving for the looters to

loot and plunder them. The religious frenzy generated by false rumours led to the subjection of the Hindus to atrocities only heard of in tribal societies. No Hindu was killed for the fact that he offered no resistance to the brutal Muslim aggression. It was not out of tolerance and compassion that the Muslims did not resort to the ruthless killing of Hindus. They as a brutalised lot indulged in loot, destruction, arson and molestation and to all intents and purposes were one inch away from the genocide of the Hindus.

Nearly five hundred houses were looted and plundered and denuded of all houses-hold articles which in tribal fashion were put to sale in the open market. Fifty houses were completely gutted leaving three hundred families shelterless and completely battered. Hundreds of Hindu shops were looted. More than sixty temples were desecrated and forty were set ablaze. All hotels and business enterprises belonging to the Hindus and even their fields with standing crops were destroyed and pillaged. Hindu women-folk were insulted, humiliated and molested.[5] Wanpoh, Lukbhavan, Fatepur, Gautam Nag, Salar, Akoora and Sopore were worst hit[6] and the Muslim hordes operating under religious frenzy indulged in loot and destruction to their heart's fill sending a chill down the spine of the victimised and hapless Hindus.[7]

The loot, destruction and mayhem were organised by the state machine involving the Muslims hordes harbouring hatred and antipathy towards the Hindus. Nothing had happened in Jammu and dance of destruction was stage-managed by the dissemination of apochryphal rumours. Had the Muslims been actually killed in Jammu, there would have been a genocide of the Hindus in Kashmir.

Ghulam Mohammad Shah proved the worstever enemy of the Kashmirian Hindus, who at his behest were looted, ravaged and put to arson and mayhem. He was no secularist and behaved essentially as a bigoted Muslim. The state machine had already slipped into the lap of bigoted and mayopic Muslim bureaucracy. Upholding the Muslim agenda as usual, he endeavoured to prove a defender of the Islamic faith and more than most a saviour of Muslims. He equally facilitated the induction of the notorious pro-Pak elements into the police force. He was reported to have raised two battalions in Kashmir police force comprising mostly the Jammat-i-Islami followers. His regime was completely identified with communalism and sectarianism. The communal forces rehearsing the drama of death and destruction felt absolutely sanguine that time for final battle was ripe.

The policy of death and destruction pursued against the Kashmirian Hindus was not well heeded by the powers at the Central Capital. Arun Nehru in his capacity as the Minister for Internal Security failed to take note of the grave signals thrown up by the communalists masquerading as nationalists and did not deem it fit to devise the remedial measures for saving Kashmir teetering on virtual political chaos. Stage for secession and separatism was already set. The atrocities inflicted on the Hindus were a device to measure the response from the Indian State and the people of India. Measuring the full-scale developments as per their parameters, the secessionists and separatists in full preparation embarked upon the war path only to challenge Indian presence in Kashmir.

The Muslims without letup went on desecrating and plundering the Hindu places of worship. Bombs and grenades were hurled on temples and shrines in Srinagar and Ganderbal. The express objective was to scare away Hindus, who, despite all forms of intimidation, clung to their home-land. The Sayyid formulations of transforming Kashmir into an Islamic state continued to provide guide-lines and impetus to the Muslim fanatics in matters of liquidating all traces of Hindu culture on the soil of Kashmir.

The loot and plunder of temples and shrines was not the handiwork of thieves and burglars. But politicians of all hues working out pak designs were behind such outrageous acts. *Sivalinga* of Dewan Temple, Goddess Kali of Anantnag and fossil images and memorial stones dating back to the hoary past of Kashmir were either burgled or broken.[8] The policemen guarding the Mahakali idol at Hariparbat did not report the incident of theft attempted by vandals thereby establishing their complicity and connivance. However, some arrests were made and a pistol of Pakistani make and a revolver were seized from their possession and the persons involved were charged with theft, burglary and violation of Arms Act. But what was amazing that politicians intervened only to secure their release.[9] The vandals were highly motivated Muslim youth operating under political patronage out to undermine any semblance of communal peace and amity. A close nexus between politicians and thieves and burglars with political persuasions was perceptible designed to liquidate the Kashmirian Hindus along with their culture and history.

There was no stop to the loot, plunder and murder of the Kashmirian Hindus, who never demanded any special privileges except their right to live as respectable citizens of a democratic

country, but the Muslim bigots basking in the sun of political patronage never allowed them peace and respite. Trouble was created round their shrines. False and illegal claims were put forth over their places of worship. Terror was created to scare them away only to establish an illusory Islamic state based on religious myopia and sheer bigotry. Killings were planned only to fructify their political motivations. The unbroken chain of events from the village of Batsargam to Siligam to Vitasta-Verinag to Lok Bhawan to Tral[10] pointered to one design of launching upon an onslaught on the Hindus and their places of worship. Boycott of the Kashmirian Hindus of Lok Bhawan led by the rabid communal elements as an ominous development was a pointer to the elimination of the Kashmirian Hindus, who were projected as the enemies of Islam. No rational Muslim appeared on the scene to oppose the social boycott of the Hindus, instilling confidence in them and dispelling the thick pall of fear and gloom.

There were agencies funding, planning and executing the murders of the Kashmirian Hindus. A Hindu youth in his thirties was killed by a mercenary, who, when interrogated, confessed that he was paid money to kill any Hindu coming his way. Who planned the murders ? Who paid money for such outrageous acts ? Did the rulers take a serious view of it ? Was the entire gang busted ? What the police did was only to hush up the whole case by posing the murderer as an insane. The reality of the matter was that the regimented and chauvinistic elements in the state police were in league with criminals planning and executing the murders of the Kashmirian Hindus. The man at the helm was himself a religious bigot, obsessed with the construction of a mosque, lacking in other empathies. It was no longer his concern to provide safety to the miniscule minority of the Hindus against such onslaught on their basic right to live and live with safety.

It was under the very nose of Ghulam Mohammed Shah that the Kashmirian Hindus were looted and plundered on 15th August, 1984. The anti-nationals observed the Independence Day as a black day. They moved about the streets of Srinagar in huge processions waving Pakistani flags and chanting anti-India slogans. Their main objective was to storm the sports stadium where the ceremonial parade was being held. In face of police resistance, they had to beat a retreat. While retreating, they let loose a reign of terror over the Hindu localities in Ganpatyar and Habakadal in Srinagar. Hindu shops were

first looted and then burnt. The Muslim hordes looted and ravaged the Hindu houses with vengefulness. A scooter looted from a Hindu house was set ablaze. Nearly a dozen bicycles looted from the Hindu houses were sadistically thrown into the Jhelum. Most of the temples in the areas were heavily pelted and scores of Hindu girls were insulted and molested.[11]

Under the political hegemony of Ghulam Mohammad Shah, the Hindus of Kashmir were openly looted and plundered. Their religious places were desecrated, ravaged and burnt. He weeded out all the remaining traces of secularism in Kashmir. He had nursed a life-ambition of constructing a mosque even in Rashtrapati Bhawan.[12] He did not have a quirk of conscience when he connived at the grabbing of a huge piece of land belonging to the Hindu Trust of Dharmarth by Molvi Iftikar Hussain Ansari, a Congress legislator for his business venture, Ansari Motors, Srinagar.

Notes and References

1. Jagmohan, *Frozen Turbulence*.
2. Refer to Mrs. Gandhis comment, *Aina Haqiqat,* issued by J & K National Conference (K).
3. Narendra Sahgal, *Dharmantarit Kashmir* (Hindi).
4. Mufti Mohammad Sayyid was openly accused of fomenting communal strife in Kashmir by K.N. Singh, the then Congress I, general secretary.
5. Narendra Sahgal, *Dharmantrit Kashmir.*
6. Y.B. Chavan's report submitted to the Prime Minister of India.
7. *Kashmir Ki Vedana* (Hindi); *Genocide of Hindus in Kashmir.*
8. *Indian Express,* 26th April, 1985.
9. *Kashmir Times,* 20th April, 1985
10. *Martand,* 15th August, 1985
11. *Times of India,* August 16, 1984
12. Speech by G.M. Ṣhah, published by N.C. (K), Srinagar.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Rajiv - Farooq Accord

The Indira-Sheikh Accord proved disastrous for Kashmir. That the Plebiscite Front was virtually wound up might have afforded India political mileage at international fora. But, in reality, Kashmir slipped into the hands of Plebiscite Fronters, who captured the state power only to turn it into a hand-maid of internal subversion, sabotage and Islamisation pogrom. The pro-Pak forces were rehabilitated and allowed to sneak into key positions. The Private Secretary to Mirza Afzal Beg was an *Al-Fateh* man involved in loot, murder and arson. The police forces were allowed to be infected by the infiltration of *Al-Fateh* saboteurs. Communalisation of the state apparatus at each level was the handiwork of the highly motivated, regimented and biased elements. Mrs. Indira Gandhi doubted the very efficacy of the Accord she had entered into with Sheikh Abdullah and that was why she accused Mir Qasim of providing a shield to the malevolent Sheikh.

Rajiv Gandhi as the Prime Minister of India failed to learn from the experiences of his mother and objective situation prevailing in Kashmir. He rehabilitated Farooq Abdullah, who was reported to be in thick contacts with forces inimical to India operating for its balkanisation. Statements of the prominent members of Parliament categorizing him as a 'security risk'[1] were completely ignored. That Farooq Abdullah connived at and objectively collaborated with anti-India forces was much on cards and had earned media focus. There were ample indications and reports about his dubious role, which could not be so easily ignored and by-passed. The Governor of the state present on scene continued to inform the Prime Minister of the deteriorating security situation in Kashmir. If it was a massive slippage, Farooq Abdullah contributed to it wilfully not taking time by forelock doling out the impression that the state authority had disappeared. He could be held guilty of not only of non-governance[2],

but of overt and covert collaboration. And Rajiv Gandhi was practically duped by the glib tongue of a secessionist.

Farooq Abdullah again took over the reins of government in November, 1987. He had already proved himself incapable of running the government. He had virtually no hold on the state apparatus. He was incompetent and inefficient and more than most given to flirtations with actresses.[3] But he continued to play the role of a collaborationist. That he would improve his own performance and set the state machine in proper gear was never on his priority list. Instead, he released twenty-three hard-core terrorists only to see Kashmir leading to the brink of disaster. The trite argument was to allow them breathing space to join main-stream politics. The trained terrorists went on destroying peace in Kashmir, resorting to loot, murder and arson, creating conditions for snapping the ties of Kashmir with India.

Farooq Abdullah deliberately ignored the sinister activities and violence of the anti-India forces, which at the very first look appeared working at the behest of a neighbouring country. There was no check imposed on the Muslim youth crossing over to the camps set up in POK. Any action proposed to check the outflow was stifled allowing things to happen. That the Muslim youth going in buses operating from Lal Chowk in Srinagar to Bandipora in district Baramulla and conductors crying hoarse that they were on way to POK were not stopped by law-enforcing agencies and bus owners neither arrested nor punished. Were the borders so porous that the Muslim youth faced no difficulty in crossing over ? Was there a nexus between Farooq Abdullah and armed forces ? He is on record to have directed his party workers to cross over to the other side of the borders for arms training,[4] thus wilfully contributing to the pace of on-going insurgency and chaos. The central leaders aware of the emerging lethal situation ignored it posing as models of inertia and non-governance. If Farooq Abdullah had abdicated from the obligation of protecting and safeguarding the integrity of the state, where was the Central Government vested with the responsibility of the protection of the country as a whole against internal sabotage and external machinations ?

Blasts, arson and all manner of sabotage corroding public order were ever on an increase. The National Conference abandoned its vanguard role and chose the back seat. It was all deliberate and in conformity with the plan-formulations. The spurt in violence and

terrorism was not countered by a well-devised strategy of vigorous action leading to the stealing of wind out of the sails of terrorists. Faooq Abdullah resorted to loud but hollow speeches threatening to meet the insurgency with a heavy hand. But nothing concrete was done. Farooq Abdullah had a design. But Rajiv Gandhi as the Prime Minister of the country ignored the danger signals leading to the enveloping of Kashmir by terrorism, loot and mayhem,[5] threatening the very integrity of India as a sovereign, secular and democratic republic.

Farooq Abdullah as the helmsman of the state heard the ringing of the alarm bells, but relished it as if it had been sonorous music in a jazz club. He knew all. His ministers were directly involved in militancy. Their sons and close relations had a firm tie-up with the insurgents, who were trained in arms in camps across the border. There were express instructions not to put down the insurgency with a heavy hand. The police might have acted, but the instructions provided an *alibi* not to act. Instead hard-core terrorists were released only to lend a new face-lift to the insurgency gaining roots in mass psyche. The Inspector General Police (CID) was categoric in informing the Chief Minister of the role-conduct of his Cabinet Ministers abetting insurgency and shielding the insurgents.[6] Farooq Abdullah said to be acting under a design did not consider it feasible to undertake measures designed to deal a heavy blow to insurgents. The terrorists were allowed a long rope, provided a shield, neither detained nor arrested. They obviously throve under the state patronage.

Farooq Abdullah from the very inception of insurgency in Kashmir had been harping on the tune of unemployment prevalent in the Muslim youth. That phenomenon as per him drove them to the wall and in extreme desperation and frustration they crossed over the borders to POK for arms training. If that was the main irritant and frustrating cause, they could have launched a constitutional movement for the redressal of the grouse. There are millions of unemployed educated youth in the country. At local level, there were thousands of the Kashmirian Hindus without jobs. There were sikh youth pining for gainful employment. There were bright chances, of course, with the patronage and support of the politicians, for the establishment of a broad-based democratic front out to launch a struggle for opening up of avenues of employment for young men and women of all hues. But, it was only a ruse. Facts spoke otherwise. Farooq Abdullah was drafting Muslim boys for insurgency only to

export them to POK for arms training. He was reported to have sent the first batch of such boys in 1984.[7] It was again followed by the despatch of other groups. Look to his confession. 'I directed my party-men to lie low, go across the border, get training in arms handling, do anything but do not get caught by Jagmohan.'[8]

The indoctrinated Muslim boys as wilful partners in the game of insurgency planned and conceived by the enemies of India took to arms under the frenzy of waging *jehad* (holy war) against the Hindu India. They developed the hue of fundamentalism by suffering regimentation of the worst type in mosques and *Madarasas* (schools) run by Jamaat-i-Islami. Out to destroy the texture of pluralistic and sane society, the Muslim youth acted as collaborators and executors of the entire game-plan for snapping the ties of Kashmir with India. As per the available data, the young Muslim boys, who have taken to insurgency and terrorism, hail from prosperous and affluent homes. None of them was on the brink of starvation. Per capita income in Kashmir is an index of high levels of prosperity. Trade, commerce, agriculture, horticulture, transport, tourism and more than most services are entirely in the hands of Muslims.

Puts the author of the *Facts Speak*, "The plea that the present turmoil in Kashmir is the consequence of unemployment, poverty or backwardness and paucity of funds to promote development activity is a wanton dis-information unleashed by the interested circles at the state and central level."[9]

Motivated by sectarianism, Farooq Abdullah highlighted the problem of unemployment prevalent in the Muslims alone. There were young men and women of other ethnic groups as well, really groaning under poverty and backwardness. They were equally frustrated and desperate. They did not take to arms and killings. In fact, other ethnic groups have been battling for their rights and also against the onslaught of Muslims on them by taking recourse to constitutional guarantees, which have been sustaining them all through the post-1947 period of absolute Muslim domination and oppression.

Farooq Abdullah as the Chief Minister of the state lent his full support to the systematic unfoldment of the fundamentalist agenda in Kashmir. Liquor shops mostly owned by the Kashmirian Hindus were under the fundamentalist onslaught. Most of the shops had been raided in Srinagar and Anantnag. What the Chief Minister did in his capacity as the chairman of the Amar Singh Cub, Srinagar was to get the sale and consumption of liquor in the Club stopped.

Such an act lent full credence and support to the anti-liquor tirade launched by the fundamentalists. Prof. M.L. Raina, a reputed educationist of Jammu and Kashmir as a member of the Club, opposed the move tooth and nail exposing the loyalties of the Chief Minister to the terrorists,[10] operating for a fundamentalist agenda and ethnic cleansing.

The temples and shrines had been under a severe onslaught of the Muslim bigots. Their presence was an eye-sore to them and for one reason or the other were desecrated and demolished. The processes of temple destruction owing their inception to the beginnings of Muslim rule in Kashmir continued to-date without any letup. Even the *Mahants* and *Pujaris* of temples and shrines were not spared. The Mahant of Vicharnag Shrine, Pandit Keshav Nath, was brutally murdered on 9th December, 1988. The fault of the *Mahant* was that he looked after the up-keep of the shrine of an ancient origin and offered worship to the presiding deity of the shrine. And Keshav Nath was killed by a Muslim constable, Mohammed Yusuf, posted at the shrine to mount guard on it lest it should suffer desecration and demolition at the hands of vandals.

The *Mahant* lived in a room of the *Dharmsala* and it was in the wee hours of the morning that the constable knocked at the door of the *Mahant*. The *Mahant* waking up opened the door and the constable pounced on him, dragged him out, in Islamic fashion, tore off his sacred thread and yelled and said that he should read *Kalima* and get converted to Islam. The policeman proved a typical proselytizer, first commanding him to read *Kalima* and if orders were flouted, then 'possession of his body was *halal*.' The *Mahant* did not oblige the Muslim bigot and killer. The Chowkidar of the shrine begged of the killer to spare him. But nothing could deter him and he persisted in his yellings to convert him to Islam. The constable kicked and beat the *Mahant* and ultimately struck him with the butt of his gun killing him on the spot.

The incident sent shock waves through the fragile minority of the Hindus. They were highly disturbed and upset, insecurity looming large over them. The police forces as a guarantee to peace and security of their life and property had slipped off into the lap of Muslim fundamentalism working out its designs against the 'infidels'. There was a sharp reaction on the part of the Kashmirian Hindus, who rallied on the issue and demanded of the powers that

be that the police forces needed an immediate weeding and cleansing. But that proved a cry in the wilderness.[11]

Farooq Abdullah made a statement in the State Assembly, 'It was a matters of shame that the policeman performing the duty of protecting somebody should commit the heinous act of murdering the very same person ..... During the course of further proceedings, it was learnt through chowkidar of the said temple namely Beant Ram, that the constable Mohammad Yusuf No 616 who was on guard duty at the said temple, had pressed the said pujari to recite the Quran and when he refused to do so, constable Mohammad Yusuf assaulted him with the rifle in his possession and beat him to death. Post-mortem report received in this case reveals that the cause of death is due to multiple cerebral concussions and internal hamorrhage.'[12]

The *Al Fateh* criminals had already infected the police force of communal virus. Mohammad Yusuf's act of killing a *Mahant* of a Hindu shrine was reflective of a deep malaise that had struck the entire state apparatus from the lower rungs to the highest echelons of power. Veerana Aivalli IPS, the DIG of Police, Kashmir Range, was candid enough to admit the presence and infiltration of *Al-Fateh* men in police force (and legislative bodies) and attributed the spurt in insurgency to such men as had risen to be the police officers (and even legislators.) He was categoric in naming Mr. Abdul Rashid Dar, MLA from the constituency of Shangus, owing allegiance to *Al-Fateh* organization[13] squarely responsible for and charged with many an act of sabotage in the Valley of Kashmir.

With Farooq Abdullah as its chairman, the Muslim *Auqaf* rose to a zenith of power wielding tremendous influence over the entire state apparatus. Its avowed objectives were not only to protect the Muslim interests at every step, but more than most aid and accelerate the processes of proselytisation. The Muslim *Auqaf* is in ownership of landed and structural properties worth crores of rupees. It can lay its hands on any piece of land belonging to government or to a Hindu individual or to a Hindu temple or shrine. There have been instances galore establishing the forcible occupation of the government lands or temple lands by the Muslim Auqaf. The Islamised bureaucracy serving the ends of grand plan aids all the processes of illegal occupation by tampering or erasing or fraudulently manipulating the records. The irony is that the land belonging to the Saligram Temple in Pahalgam was straightaway transferred to the Muslim Auqaf under

a government fiat No : 702, dated 31st December, 1981.[14] The revenue records were clandestinely tampered with by the Islamised revenue hierarchy. Such transfers though illegal and fraudulent took place without the knowledge of the Hindus. Records and documents were produced to counter the claims but the Islamised revenue hierarchy discounted their claims on the basis of frauds committed and tamperings made.

The bigoted Muslims of all hues from different parts of the country paid regular visits to and had been in direct contact with their likes in the Valley of Kashmir. What was beyond the orbit and scope of their achievement in their own states became a perceptible reality in Kashmir as a result of their persistent proddings and preachings. *Allah Walle* as an organization upholding bigotry and sectarianism as their basic agenda, had established firms roots at grass-root level. The vicious preachers clad in white connected with the organization enjoyed patronage of men in corridors of power. Their main objective was to prepare the Muslims for *jehad* (holy war) against the Hindus and establish a Muslim state based on a parochial thought model. They had virtually captured all mosques in the Valley and were working at the behest of the forces master-minding the whole plan of insurgency and terrorism in Kashmir. They were responsible for whipping up religious frenzy designed to cause a hiatus in the Muslim psyche, thus breaking it loose from any strings binding it with the aeons-old Kashmirian.ethos of tolerance, non-violence and mutual good-will.

That they had a political role became visibly express only when they in mosques condemned India for forcibly occupying Kashmir. They were loud in their tones to talk ill of the Hindus given to idolatry. In their exhortations, they urged the Muslims to launch a crusade with the utmost ferocity for breaking loose from the Indian hegemony to establish an Islamic state.

The *Allah Walle* made a debut on the religio-political scene of Kashmir by holding a seven day convention in downtown. It was a real grand show, each detail of the arrangements worked out to a finesse. It was a government sponsored convention. Farooq Abdullah and his Law Minister flaunting a long beard showed up at the convention to boost up the morale of the campaign managers, who were assigned the task of spreading out the support-base for launching *jehad* to weed out infidelity and anti-Islamic forces. The entire Muslim bureaucracy was present at the convention, thus lending it vigour

and sanctity. The congregation behaved and acted parochialy, thought and mused in obscurantist phraseology and raised issues of fundamentalist complexion, offering irrelevant cliches as the solutions. By lending his patronage to such parochial and fundamentalist congregations, Farooq Abdullah having parted his ways with secular and pluralist agenda of the National Conference was signalling the emergence of forces determined to turn turtle the applecart of India in Kashmir. The *Allah Walle* convention as spearheaded by the vested interests openly flaunted fanaticism, bigotry, moribund and reactionary ideology– all presented under the facade of religious theme.

" 'Allah Walle' another Muslim organization in India also directly helped in whipping up religious frenzy. They held huge congregations in Kashmir where they openly spoke to Kashmiri people exhorting them to strive hard for the Islamic rule and Islamic Law. Many young Kashmiris were taken to U.P. for training. In August-September 1988, a week long conference-cum-camp in which delegates from many states of India and a few Arabs participated was held at Eid-Gah, Srinagar. Many high ranking government officials attended the said conference,"[15] puts the author of *Genocide of Hindus in Kashmir.*

Another front for the mobilization of Muslims was opened by Farooq Abdullah cautiously and warily working out his design for secession. The Front worked under a deceptive nomenclature of 'Samaj Sudhar Society'. It was invested with the same ideology of *jehad*, Muslim redemption from 'slavery' and establishment of an Islamic state. But the front externally apparelled itself with social reform to fight the evils that had crept and seeped into the social fabric of Muslims. The Front worked with the government funds and had its office in the Municipal Building, Srinagar. Dr. G.Q. Allaqaband, now the principal of the Medical College, Srinagar, was spearheading the awareness movement ostensibly for social reform. He had full and unstinted support from the Islamised bureaucracy and other bigoted elements owing complete allegiance to Jamaat-i-Islami. Most of the Muslim lecturers and teachers upholding parochial and obscurantist agenda were closely connected with the Front. The Divisional Commissioner of Kashmir, Shafi Pandit, and other vital cogs in the government machinery invested the Front with their patronage and direction. Only to strengthen the roots of the Front, Farooq Abdullah, the Chief Minister of J&K State, donated a sum of Rs. one lakh from the public exchequer to the innocous looking organization. Declaration in this behalf was made from the

pulpit of Hazratbal shrine, Srinagar only to lend religious sanctity and legitimacy to the organization pursuing anti-India campaign.

Farooq Abdullah was determined to dig out the roots of India in Kashmir. He appeared to have nefarious designs up his sleeves, irrigating the fields of secession, separatism and fundamentalism. 'Samaj Sudhar Society' was in essence anti-India and anti-Hindu, highly sectarian and biased. If social evils were to be fought, it could have been campaigned from a common front formed by all segments of the Kashmirian population. How was it that the Muslims alone were conceived to have developed social evils, which needed be fought with government funds ? The essence of the intent was that the Front would have been exposed to the last tatters had it been thrown open to all social segments irrespective of faith and religion. The Hindus smelt a rat in the organization and as a matter of design were kept at a distance. Mobilization of the Muslims alone was the main objective and religion was the only device and plank for the achievement of the objective.

To cap it all, the state apparatus was pressed into service to meet the ends of Muslim cause. The State Information Department was misused to highlight the activities of the Front by the issuance of press notes. An organization for carrying out reforms in the Muslim society, a society motivated by sectarian ends, a non-governmental organization was given donations from government coffers and its activities pursuing the ends inimical to the broader interests of the state were highlighted by the Information Department run by the government. This was how the state power was made use of only to meet the sectarian and communal ends. The Kashmirian Hindus also had the malaise of social evils, which could prove baneful for their wholesome and healthy growth. They too had social reform organizations and Farooq Abdullah was far from showing any interest in them, not to talk of granting moneys to such organizations. Be it said, Farooq Abdullah was out to destroy the secular polity of Kashmir by feeding and throwing up communal and sectarian organizations with anti-India agenda based on hate-campaign.

Another outfit *Dukhtaran-i-Milat* – Daughters of the Muslim Community, a front organization of the Jamaat-i-Islami, apparently working for upliftment of the Muslim women, was deeply pledged to the cause of injecting the communal virus into the Muslim fabric, thus playing a complementary role to the 'Samaj Sudhar Society' floated by Farooq Abdullah. In reality, on ground, a close nexus was

forged between the twin outfits by the powers that be only to add stridency and vigour to hate-India campaign. The agenda upheld by the *Dukhtaran-i-Milat* was the dissemination and perpetuation of antediluvian attitudes, Islamisation of the Kashmirian ethos and widening of the chasm between the Hindus and the Muslims – all components of a strategy for *jehad*. Through slow but sure processes, the outfit spreads its octopus-like tentacles in semi-literate Muslim women to re-orient them in Islamic ways for upholding processes of Islamisation put on the plank of sheer communalism. As per the survey of the outfit, these women running into thousands had sneaked into the massive network of schools established by the government and were of prime importance in matters of poisoning the budding girls put under their charge to meet the ends of *jehad*.

The cadre of the outfit enjoyed patronage from the Islamised bureaucracy. Each school for girls was converted into a mosque for sermons and *jehad* resulting in the demise of content and message of liberal education for establishing a reason-oriented sane society. With the branches of the outfit littered over the affluent towns of the Valley, it spared no effort to hurl the Muslim women into a ghetto mentality obliging them to snap their ties with the Hindu women, who served as models for them to emulate. It played a tremendous role to keep the cauldron of inter-communal hatred and distrust simmering. The women officers connected with the outfit collected funds for it and proved a scourge for the Hindu ladies serving under them.

The bigotry of the outfit got etched on the public mind when it pursued the agenda of converting the Hindu and Sikh girls to Islam. The chief of the outfit, Aisha Indrabi, now in gaol, has been charged with the forcible conversion of the Hindu and Sikh girls, who were drafted for terrorist activities at gun-point.

To meet the ends of insurgency and terrorism, the outfit is said to have netted and exported not fewer than 800 Muslim girls to the camps set up in POK for training in arms and ammunition under Afghan, Pakistani, Libyan and Iranian desperadoes.

Committed to the destruction of Kashmir and its heritage, the outfit has been in receipt of money from almost all Islamic countries feeding fundamentalism in countries harbouring pluralist politics. Operating for religious agitprop the outfit having incurred support and patronage from the highly biased and regimented Muslim clerics

is down-right parochial and fanatic working for Islamisation pogrom with its prominent thrust against the Hindu minority of Kashmir.

When Pakistan in complicity with the Muslim rabids opened its proxy war against India in the theatre of Kashmir, the women cadre of the *Dukhtaran-i-Milat* were in front ranks of all types of subversive and terrorist acts. Donning shrouds *(Kafan)*, they led many anti-India demonstrations. Dressed in veils, they served as conduits for subversion and carriers for weapons. The unscrupulous terrorists more wedded to lechery than 'Azadi' have proved barbarous in violating their innocence and that is how they have been seen thronging the hospitals in Ramban, Udhampur, Jammu and Delhi for abortions

The outfit, in essence, communal and moribund, despite some sporadic raids on its headquarters grew and thrived under the protective shield of Muslims in corridors of power. No serious efforts were invested to stamp it out for saving the humanistic value-structure of Kashmir from decimation. The tie-up between the twin outfits of *Samaj Sudhar* and *Dukhtaran-i-Milat* harnessed and generated the destructive forces for indoctrination of Muslims of either sex for *jehad* and liquidation of minorities.

The political radar screen of Kashmir recording sufficient signals of brewing insurgency and terrorism did not fail to record the sudden founding of the Jehlum Valley Medical College in Srinagar where the Muslim rich sought admission for their wards for M.B.B.S programme on payment of fabulous donations. The coterie responsible for the founding of the college basked in the sun of Farooq Abdullah's lavish patronage. Dr. Abdul Ahad Guru, now slain by the terrorists, as the fulcrum of the entire plan, roped in Dr. Mehraj-ud-din, professor of Medicine, Govt. Medical College, Srinagar; Mustafa Kamal, Farooq Adbullah's brother and Minister in his cabinet; Mufti Mehraj, Additional Advocate General J&K Government and Prof. G. M. Sheikh, a notorious ISI (Inter State Intelligence of Pakistan) agent and saboteur.

The Medical College just started in absence of infrastructure (staff, facilities and other requirements) was only a facade to serve as a conduit for fabulous sums pouring in from the Muslim countries openly feeding insurgency in Kashmir. Dr. Abdul Ahad Guru, a saboteur, would be on foreign jaunts to Saudi Arabia and other Muslim countries to mobilize donations apparently for the Medical College. But, with the advent of terrorism, the huge funds of the college were diverted to the terrorist outfits operating for *jehad* against

India and the Hindu minorities. Mufti Mehraj and Prof. G.M. Sheikh, now in Tihar jail, have been charged with subversion and feeding of terrorism in Kashmir following the dictates of ISI mentors or fruition of Pak objectives in Kashmir. The two saboteurs have funnelled Medical College funds running into lakhs to rabid terrorist outfits like JKLF, *Al Jehad*, *Ikhwan-ul-Muslimeen*, *et al.* They are said to have built enormous properties in Delhi and Nepal with the money they have been receiving from foreign sources for intensification of *jehad* in Kashmir. Their bank accounts in Delhi have already been seized. That they have been serving as conduits for foreign money get established by huge sums credited to their accounts initially opened with paltry sums.

Who inducted Mufti Mehraj into the governing body of the Jehlum Valley Medical College ? Who appointed Prof. G. M. Sheikh as the administrative officer of the said college despite his being a Pak-spy ? Where from did the money come? It is generally held that there were men in corridors of power who lavished their blessings on all the projects innovated to secure the secession of Kashmir from India. Could it be said that the Chief Minister of the state himself was with the entire game plan from its take off to the touch down stages ?

That Farooq Abdullah was translating a design into actual praxis became perceptible when he created a volatile situation by issuance of government orders stalling the Darbar Move to the winter capital of Jammu. The Valley was fast turning into a boiling cauldron and the terrorists had already made their debut. What was needed that the state should flex its muscles to curb the growing violence and establish its authority and competence to meet the insurgency. Ignoring the impending challenges to the security of the state, the man at the helm of affairs added more chaos to the already chaotic situation. The public opinion in Jammu got inflammed and there were massive protests and demonstrations to condemn the chauvinistic act of stalling the 'office move' to Jammu, which has been in vogue for decades. As part of a pre-meditated plan, the Bar Association of Srinagar unleashed an agitation to the end of forcing the government to implement the orders. Farooq Abdullah brought the two components of the state to a head-on clash and must have been as pleased as punch. The state was put on tenter-hooks and before the impasse could be resolved, the highly motivated elements in the Bar

Association gave their agitation a communal thrust by setting ablaze the temple properties and Hindu houses in Srinagar.

The Muslim marauders supporting the agitation set the entire shopping complex of Somyar Temple in Habbakadal, Srinagar to flames. The Hindu shopkeepers suffered enormous losses. The Hindu houses were pelted at and then burnt. A temple at Barbar Shah was completely gutted after it was set ablaze. A reign of terror was let loose against the Hindu community. Thrown out of gear, the Hindus protested, demonstrated, clamoured for security and pleaded for justice. A mammoth public meeting of the Kashmiri Pandits held in the premises of the Somyar Temple to protest against the outrage was stoned by the Muslim rabids. Dozens of protestors including women were brutally injured. The police posse present on the scene witnessed the brutality, but failed to act.[16]

All the Hindu fora forged a common front to fight the outrage. Peaceful protests were made, dharnas were held and representations were shot. Farooq Abdullah and his two Ministers, Mohammad Shafi and P. L. Handoo, met the Kashmirian Hindu delegations and made tall promises to reconstruct the entire complex. But, the whole complex is still a pile of ruins revealing the dubious role of the powers that be. As if it were not enough, a Muslim rabid, Qazi Nissar, owing allegiance to the Muslim United Front and Mufti Mohammad Sayyid, whipped up mass frenzy in the township of Anantnag to capture the Gautam Nag, a Hindu shrine, where the pilgrims on way to the Amarnath cave have a dip and then resume their journey to the holy cave. Blinded by hate and prejudice, he after the fashion of first generation Muslim learners dabbled in the domain of linguistics only to coin a new etymology for the word 'Gautam'. To him, the real name of Gautam Nag is 'Gurtam Nag' where a horse has stayed for rest. Making a mockery of himself and all he mobilized, he gave wide currency to his linguistic feat, which won him laurels at the hands of Muslim bigots.

Qazi Nissar, a Ph.D in a language, came to be seen as a pale version of Sikandar Butshikan who had pillaged and burnt the Martand Temple. He issued a clarion call to the Muslims to capture the Hindu shrine generating unprecedented communal frenzy. Supporting his vicious act, all rabids affiliated to the Jamaat-i-Islami and other political formations got rallied for an aggression on the shrine. It happened even when the Hanfia Auqaf of Anantnag was categoric in declaring that all the Muslim properties were under its possession.

Unheeding it, the Gautam Nag was turned into a hot issue for unleashing an orgy of communal frenzy. The revenue records somehow not tampered with, reinforced the Hindu possession of the shrine. Days were fixed for onslaught on the shrine and then abandoned. The process continued with the sole objective of keeping the communal cauldron on non-stop simmer only to terrorize Hindus, keep them on tenter-hooks and scare them away. On every call the Muslim hordes collected in unprecedented numbers to maraud, plunder and capture the shrine. The Hindus were insulted, reviled, humiliated and warned not to thwart the Muslims from capturing the shrine. The walls of the shrine were demolished and encroachments made. The *Dharamsala* was burnt and the *Mahant* beaten and spat at. What ensued as the worst was that the Hindu houses in Anantnag were pelted at and attempts made on their life and property.[17]

Rome was burning and Farooq Abdullah was fiddling. His government had gone on a perpetual holiday allowing the bigots and law-breakers to establish law of the jungle. No attempts were made to thwart those who were disturbing and destroying communal peace and amity. A perceptible nexus was what had forged all shades of Muslim bigots into a monolith for waging war on the Kashmirian Hindus. Even the Congress leaders with occasional feeble and vague statements issued under pressure failed to stem the tidal wave of communalism and bigotry engulfing the Hindus. The communal fury directed against the Hindus and their cultural manifestations found an echo even in the state legislature. The legislators cutting across party affiliations demanded of the Hindus to establish their claim to the shrine establishing the essential hue of the house. But, stifling the frenzied voices, Molvi Iftikhar Ansari, a Congress legislator, is said to have yelled that the Muslims should also establish their claims to the Hazratbal shrine.

Farooq Abdullah's meeting with Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala was largely responsible for cementing close ties between the Kashmir and Punjab secessionists wearing religious fanaticism. A massive procession of Sikhs starting from a *Gurudwara* in Lal Chowk, Srinagar was joined by the Muslims and crossing the old Amira Kadal bridge it went amok to plunder, loot and desecrate the Hanuman Temple. Replicating Mahmood Ghazni, Muslims broke all the idols and threw the main idol of the temple into the Jehlum. All the Hindu shops in the vicinity of the temple were looted. The procession yelling 'Muslim Sikh Unity Zindabad' forged ahead towards Nirankari

Bhawan and raided it and set it ablaze. The Hindu houses in the neighbourhood were looted, plundered and torched.

It was a novel but ominous development. The Sikhs abetting the communal agenda against the Kashmirian Hindus was shocking for them. It was within the ken of all that in pursuit of a strategy to add to the insecurity and fear-psychosis of the Hindus, a behind-the-scene understanding was forged between the Sikh and the Muslim secessionists and the procession raising slogans of communal hue with its main thrust against the minority as a support base for India in Kashmir was its manifestation. The gruesome and grisly happenings took place in Srinagar and seventeen kilometres away the holy shrine of Tullamulla, *Kshirbhwani,* got enveloped in a pall of gloom when all the Hindus got collected in the shrine for a religious festival buzzed off like frightened doves to their houses. Farooq Abdullah appearing on the scene had exhorted them to quit as their homes in Srinagar were set ablaze and looted.

The National Conference as an organization upholding nationalism and secularism had swerved away from the cherished ideals, which had at initial stages enthused all segments of the Kashmirian populace for a unified action for the realization of a socio-political order put on the plank of rationalism, pluralism and co-existence. The same organization over the years opted for parochialism and sectarianism under the vigorous impact of Mullahs, bigots and fanatics, who made no bones about their real intentions for subverting and communalising the entire polity of Kashmir.[18]

Mr. Attah Ullah Suharwardy, a minister in the Farooq Abdullah Ministry, was committed in word and deed to the Islamisation pogrom. As a man wedded to parochialism and archaic thought modes, he set the ship of National Conference government in right direction when in all candour and frankness he is said to have declared on the floor of the House that the Muslims had opted for India because it was to be Islamised while Pakistan was already a Muslim state. Mr. Suharwardy was well appreciated by all his likes in the House presided over by a leader, who did not deem it relevant to controvert the highly biased bigoted and irrelevant statement of a Minister. The House was reduced to a pulpit in the mosque where-from plans and fiats for Islamisation and proselytisation were doled out to injure the religious susceptibilities of men of other faiths.

Dr. Suharwardy in his capacity as the Minister of Education was invited to inaugurate the Science Exhibition in the State Institute of

Education, Srinagar. He is said to have cast a contemptuous look at the entire prospect of exhibition calling it all a wasteful exercise. The remark of the Minister caused surprise to all. Coming out of the exhibition hall with his eye-brows knit-up, the Minister yelled at the principal of the Institute to get all into the hall where he would express his views on education. With everybody present in the hall, the Minister sermonized on the Islamic goals of education emphasizing that Caliph Usman had to be posed as a model before all. At this, a teacher without seeking permission for the interruption stood up and said, "I am a Kashmiri Pandit. Sir, what are your orders for me ?"

The Minister was down in the tongue. He left the hall in a huff, upset and disturbed.

But it was not the end of all. Before he would enter his government car, a Muslim lady teacher, nice and well behaved complained of supersession. The Minister in all sagacity informed the lady teacher that as per Islamic law two women were equal to one man and accordingly she should measure the parameters of her rights. Whether the lady teacher got convinced or not was a matter of investigation and curiosity for all present on the scene when the Minister was expressing his Islamic wisdom and scholarship.

Farooq Abdullah authoring and patronizing the Front operating under the garb of social reform, Atta Ullah Suharwardy preaching for Islamisation of India, Mohammad Maqbool playing host to the conference-cum-camp of *Allah Walle* and P.L. Handoo destroying all vestiges of the Hindu culture and history cumulatively led Kashmir to the brink of disaster.

Aware of all the developments in the political scenario of Kashmir, Shahi Imam of Delhi could not resist the temptation of fishing in the troubled waters. While addressing a Friday prayer meeting at Anantnag, he fuelled the communal fires designed to accelerate the processes of snapping the ties of Kashmir with India. He was loud in expressing his pro-Pak sentiments earning a loud applause from the audience and more than most stressed the implementation of UN resolutions on Kashmir to solve the vexatious tangle. His communally charged speech in the mosque was followed by a string of communal disturbances in Srinagar, Anantnag and many other places in the Valley of Kashmir. April 1988 was a bench-mark in the history of Kashmir. The communal virus had vitiated the polity of Kashmir and Shahi Imam's visit was not

accidental. It was certainly a planned visit only to lend new hues and dimension to communally charged politics of Kashmir.

That politics in Kashmir was on an absolute downslide became perceptible only when all parochial and fundamentalist forces with a communal agenda unified their ranks to form a Muslim United Front to fight the elections for the State Assembly. The Muslim United Front put up its candidates mostly in the province of Kashmir and its propaganda plank was sheer communalism and obscurantism. That the MUF would have won elections whole hog and formed the government was leagues away from reality. Farooq Abdullah stole their thunder by resorting to the same propaganda gambit that was the sheet-anchor of the MUF. The fact remains that the MUF would have won some seats from the constituencies where Jamaat-i-Islami was well-entrenched. There certainly were some constituencies wherefrom the National Conference candidates were declared successful with very low margins and thus the issue of rigging caught public eye and media attention.

The heart of the matter was that the National Conference despite its alliance with the Congress Party had lost its commitment to the politics of secularism, democracy and pluralism. It was essentially rooted in hate-India persuasions and parochial thought ways. The anti-nationals had their full sway over the organization. Secession and separatism as symbolized by the Article 370 were the main election plank. Doling out of threats to the Kashmiri Hindus that their bodies would fall in Kashmir and their tattered clothes would reach Delhi[19] were the usual fare served to feed the Muslim masses only to foment communal divide for a bigger battle. The Hindu voters never felt secure to exercise their right to vote. A Hindu Inspector General of Police had to return from the polling booth as some goon as a matter of right had impersonated for him. In 1987 elections goons of all shades had free play. The same goons worked for MUF and were manhandled and harassed by the N.C. goons. Elections everywhere have a role-conduct for the goons, just mercenaries hired by power brokers to fulfil their political ends. Kashmir witnessed the same scenario.

The strategy of the Muslim United Front was only to mobilize anti-India forces for waging a final battle for *jehad* (holy war) designed to win redemption from the Hindu India. Its eyes were never set on the seat of power. It kicked up hate-India dust with a view to measuring the public response. The Front succeeded in

winning empathy from the Indian pubic opinion which is largely wedded to democratic ways and norms. That it was a saviour of democracy in Kashmir was the stance that it cashed in on only to smoke-screen its highly bigoted and communal agenda. As a matter of reality, the Muslim United Front signalled the death-knell for all pretensions that the Kashmirian Muslims had democratic values of life based on secularism and pluralism. It by all norms marked sacrificing of millennia old Kashmirian heritage at the altar of bigotry and religious strife, a reversal, a somersault or U-turn on their part, trampling upon tolerance, accommodation and mutual understanding as cohesive values in a pluralist fabric. Hindu-baiting was at the top of its agenda. Religious frenzy was what it had plans to let loose only to liquidate the Hindus. The Muslim United Front was a combine of all Muslim bigots, parochial and out-dated clerics who had been in league with and on the pay-rolls of a neighbouring country for launching *jehad* against the Kashmirian Hindus, who as a matter of design, were condemned as spies of India on the soil of Kashmir only for ethnic cleansing.

The elitist thinkers in India strained every nerve to attribute the proliferation of insurgency and terrorism in Kashmir to the rigging of elections. That it was a failure of democracy forcing the Muslims to the wall, left with no option other than that of violence and terrorism is a sheer half-truth. The Muslim United Front as a combination of all Muslim reaction never upheld democracy, tolerance and co-existence as canons of civilized life. Its guns were openly trained against the minorities of Kashmir, who have an inalienable right to live in the land with honour and dignity. Its open agenda was to erode and liquidate the rishi-oriented ethos of Kashmir converting it to an Islamic enclave reducing non-Muslims to the status of zimmies (second-class citizens) to be protected only on payment of hated *jazia* (poll tax). Wreckers of democracy could never be saviours of democracy. The watch-word of insurgency in Kashmir has been *jehad*, its destination has been the establishment of *Nizam-e-Mustafa* and its weapon has been kicking up of religious frenzy.

There is no denying the fact that insurgency in Kashmir is the direct outcome of Pak plans to subvert peace in Kashmir by proliferation of terrorism and the Indian rulers confined to their ivory towers unheeded the developments. Since 1947 Kashmir has been a hot-bed of intrigues directed to undo the historical reality of Kashmir's

accession to India. A neighbouring country has been funding and feeding subversion, sabotage and mayhem. It has been combining its onslaught with the exploitation of religious ties that the Muslims have with the Muslim fraternity elsewhere. At local level, a mushroom growth of organizations operating under various dubious nomenclatures fed by money pumped in by Saudi Arabia, Iran and other Muslim countries worked havoc with the Muslim psyche preparing it for aiding, abetting and actively participating in the processees for *jehad* (religious war) and snapping of ties with the Hindu India.

The well-devised strategy was to involve the Muslims of Kashmir, regimenting them against India, feeding them on a farrago of half-truths and lies, calling upon them to 'awake' as 'Islam is in danger'. In view of the three wars fought by Pakistan without any tangible gains, the strategists in Pakistan succeeded in luring the Muslim youth to armed insurgency with the active collaboration of the Muslim leaders, who had already bridged up the political schisms and divergencies in the name of Muslim brotherhood and had propagated the perilous thoughtway of avoiding wasteful expenditure on marriages only to purchase arms and ammunition for seeking redemption from Hindu yoke. People's League, Mahaz-i-Azadi, Jamaat-i-Tulba and *Umte-Islami*, all holding aloft the pennon of Islamic *jehad*, have been in constant touch with their mentors across the borders. These organizations have been playing the Pak-game in Kashmir and flourished under official patronage and connivance.

The Indian Government , despite ominous signals, failed to act well in time. It depended on Farooq Abdullah, who had been assuring the Prime Minister that he should forget Kashmir as he had taken over the reins of government. But his treacherous act of having sent a batch of Muslim boys across the borders for arms training was of tremendous and inestimable significance in the history of Kashmiri Muslims. He gave it a ring of legitimacy buttressed by a promise of protection. He repeated the process by despatching other groups, which fact is testified to by his own confession. Fired by a sense of vengefulness and commitment to Independent Kashmir,[20] he created a situation, which as per his estimates would remain well within his grip and control. But, Inter-Services Intelligence network of Pakistan had already dug deeper roots into the Muslim masses of Kashmir and had trained numberless Muslim boys indoctrinated to fiddle its tunes of annexing Kashmir to Pakistan and when terrorism opened

its history in Kashmir, there were not fewer than 198 outfits operating under the direct patronage of ISI, pushing Farooq and his cohorts to the backwaters of Kashmir scenario.

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CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

ProxyWar Declared

The Muslim terrorists fully equipped with training in arms and terror strategies found conditions favourable to them with the state government abdicating from its obligations of governance and the Prime Minister of the country prevaricating and unheeding the developments in Kashmir fraught with the potential of causing disaster for the country at large. The Zia-plan conceived only to fragment and balkanise the country was in full operation eroding the credibility of the governments, both at local and national level, mobilising mass support for terrorism and militancy, preparing the Muslims of all shades for *jehad* (holy war) and more than most for hounding out the Hindu minorities. It was intriguing that Farooq Abdullah and Rajiv Gandhi were seen at the same wave length, both of them behaving like ostriches with the express intent of allowing the Muslim terrorists to establish their complete grip over the Muslim masses only to enlist their unstinted support for the terrorist activities leading to the establishment of a Muslim state with the Hindu minorities absolutely herded out.

The Punjab was already in the grip of terrorism disrupting normal parameters of stable political and economic life. There were ample indications that there was a close nexus between the Punjab and the Kashmir terrorists working for de-stabilisation of the country resulting in its fragmentation. It will be pertinent to put that Kashmir was the main target of the strategists across the borders and the Punjab was only a diversion. How it went unheeded is absolutely amazing and intriguing.

The Muslim militants got a shot in their arm when they succeeded in kidnapping the daughter of the Home Minister of India, Mufti Mohammad Sayyid. The entire tribe of the Central Ministers, all in sheer panic, landed in Kashmir only to retrieve her from the clutches of the armed terrorists. Negotiations were quickly entered into with the terrorists to secure her release. That a Justice on the bench of

Allahabad High Court turned up to wield his enormous influence over the terrorists for the release of Mufti's daughter is a sad commentary on Indian judiciary. The same ministers remained tight-lipped when the Kashmirian Hindus were brutally murdered and hounded out to meet the ends of *lebensraum* game. Given to swapping favours, the Central Ministers under the orders of the Raja of Manda conceded the demand of the kidnappers to release five hard-core terrorists including Hamid Sheikh, the deputy chief of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front. What was astounding was that Farooq Abdullah.had already issued orders for the release of the terrorists before negotiations were held with them thereby establishing his collaboration and complicity.[1]

The release of five hard-core terrorists was stated to have been opposed tooth and nail by the then chief secretary, Moosa Raza, who measured the disastrous consequences of the act for the future course of developments in the state. The Central Ministers with no awareness of the Muslim psyche and their cultural model conceded the demand of the kidnappers for the release of five hard-core terrorists in exchange for the daughter of Mufti Mohammad Sayyid, the worst-ever hater of the Kashmirian Hindus whom he got looted, plundered and ravaged and their places of worship demolished and burnt.[2] The negotiated settlement was nothing but an act of meek and disgraceful capitulation designed to secure the release of the Home Minister's daughter at the cost of broader national interests, which were at stake in Kashmir already in the whirpool of terrorism and mayhem.

The Central Ministers out to ingratiate themselves with the Home Minister exhibited utmost haste in working out a settlement with the terrorists without gauging the disaster that it was bound to spell for the country as a whole. What would have happened if the Home Minister's daughter was kept in captivity for a longer period ? The terrorists at best would have killed her as they had killed numberless innocents. The kidnapping of the Home Minister's daughter rocked the entire flock of the Central Ministers, who did not speak a word about the innocent men and women, ruthlessly and wantonly butchered by the same terrorists they were going to release. Was the Home Minister's daughter high above the vital interests of the country? Was she a very precious person necessitating a settlement with the terrorists out to snap the ties of Kashmir with India? By all standards she was an ordinary citizen suffering the terrorist atrocity like many other women, who were raped, sliced into pieces and barbarically

cast off to the ravenous vultures. And the Home Minister should have well measured that his daughter could be a prime target of the Muslim terrorists. How was it that she moved about freely and carelessly? Could it be divined that she had much love lost for the Muslim terrorists and allowed them to fructify their design by carrying her off as a precious catch? Then appeals were telecast in the name of Islam for her release and no such appeals were issued when Hindu women were butchered and barbarically treated.

Sacrificing the vital national interests, the release of the five hard-core terrorists caused an unprecedented upswing to terrorism in Kashmir. It gave a big boost to the morale of the terrorists, who were hailed as *Mujahids* fighting for Islam and true sons of the soil out to change the destinies of the Muslim millions. The Muslim women crowded the streets in unprecedented numbers only to sing paens and poems for the terrorists, who stole the occasion for display of arms and firing of shots. The Muslim masses got rallied under the umbrella of terrorism for waging a *jehad* designed to establish an Islamic state. The Muslim literates only as first generation learners lauded the role- conduct of the Muslim boys and girls taking to arms thereby removing the label of cowards attached to them by the Mughal oppressors. The act of abject surrender on the part of Central Government created an unfathomable sense of euphoria in the Muslim masses, who were led to believe that *Azadi* was round the corner and what was needed was only to get rallied under the banner of terrorism held aloft by the highly regimented Muslim youth.

The capitulation on the part of Central Government sent wrong signals to the terrorists, who used the device of kidnapping for mass mobilisation and entrenchment of terrorism in the polity of Kashmir. The Muslim terrorists having understood the efficacy of the device went on feeding the machine of terrorism and utilised the deep sense of euphoria that the release of hard-core terrorists had generated for recruiting freshers to be trained as terrorists locally or in camps set up in POK, thus making the fort of terrorism impregnable. The Muslim masses absolutely collaborated with terrorists, who were believed to usher in Prophet's governance. They provided them shelter, cover, refuge, money and all manner of support and succour. In reality, terrorism found its seminary for breeding only in Muslim homes doling out the worst type of bigotry to their blooming buds quite at an impressionable age.

With the snow-balling of terrorism, the terrorists as is wont with

the Muslim bigots turned mosques essentially meant for religious prayers into their sanctuaries.[3] Arms and ammunition were dumped there. A battery of cassettes loaded with anti-India and anti-Hindu venom had found its way into the mosques much earlier than the actual declaration of proxy war against India and the Kashmirian Hindus. In the Mughal times, Muhta Khan, the worst bigot, had set the precedent for the barbaric Muslim terrorists only to be emulated. He had declared war against the Kashmirian Hindus from the pulpit of a mosque leading to the infliction of worst-ever atrocities on them.

At exact 11 O'clock in the night of 19th January, 1990, all the mosques equipped with mikes suddenly started yelling out war cries against India and the Kashmirian Hindus. The *Kaffirs* were issued an ultimatum to quit as the star of Islam was up in the sky of Kashmir. The war waged through cassettes exhorted every Muslim man, woman, and child to take to streets to shatter off the bonds of socalled servitude for a social and political order sanctioned under Islamic tenets. The shrill yelling issuing out from mosques simultaneously through the length and breadth of Kashmir was so sudden that the Hindus got panicked and threatened waiting to get massacred at the hands of Muslim hordes who got collected in thousands in the streets braving the chill-cold of the winter night. Muslims in unprecedented numbers formed processions yelling at the 'Indian dogs' to quit and the 'enemies of Islam' to vacate only to pave way for an Islamic enclave.

They appeared not to be the same old Muslims. They had suffered a sudden metamorphosis bearing brazen, stern, torrid, and corroded countenances, brutalised and dehumanised, crying hoarse to give a jolt to the citadel of India in Kashmir, pelting stones at the Hindu houses, breaking doors, windows and window-panes, threatening death to the frightened inmates had they dared move out, brimming with killer instinct, all bordering on absolute barbarity. The Muslim crowds swelling in size and scale flitting about the streets filling them with their lousy and stenchy but lethal slogans appeared as if they had developed an excruciating distress, convulsing and writhing in agony and pain only to cast off the slough of decency and civilised demeanour, softness and mellowed humility. Frenzied and wild, they seemed to have lost not only rational but even reasonable modes of thinking in that high-pitched hysteria caused by the miasmic blaring of religious venom from mosques. The sudden emergence of such a malaise and that too without much of fore-warnings, almost in

close kinship with a disease recurring that had shown its symptoms 42 years ago shook the Hindu captives in their roots, most of them frantically contacting the Police Control Room and Raj Bhawan. It did not take the captive Hindus much of time to measure their concrete reality that history was repeating itself for them and their fate in their mother-land was sealed by the hurricane of Muslim fundamentalism and bigotry.

The barbaric killings of the Kashmirian Hindus by the Muslim terrorists without rhyme or reason failed to evoke a murmur of protest from the Muslim majority signalling the crumbling of the walls of Muslim rationality. 'Give the dog a bad name and kill him' was the rationale of the terrorist killings. The Hindus condemned as *mukhabirs* (agents) – and every Muslim uncritically believing so – were wantonly slaughtered and all Muslims everywhere without a single exception, no matter what their station in life was, de-sensitised under the blinding effect of hate assumed an eerie muteness and dumbfoundedness, relishing the sadistic killings with whoops of joy and whimpers of satisfaction, thereby establishing their solidarity with the armed bigots. The Hindus simple and innocent, unarmed and non-violent, stood shaken in their roots failing to comprehend the reason for their imminent decimation at the hands of fascist hordes led by armed fundamentalists. They were on cross-roads unable to determine whether to cling to their ancestral homes and hearths, to their roots and moorings and to the scenic splendour of their land of genesis or quit under the terrorist armed onslaught.

The state machine crippled and thrown out of gear failed to flex its muscles against the terrorists upholding and wantonly executing an agenda of death and destruction for the Hindu minorities. Had the state machine appeared to be in pink health, it could have sustained the hapless Hindus only to hold on. But, Farooq Abdullah had already played a treacherous role by playing fast and loose with the terrorist menace needing a firm handling to give roots to the impression that the state power had virtually suffered perishment. The Islamised bureaucracy and more than most the Kashmir police playing a collaborative role, true to their form, had deliberately abdicated for the terrorists to take over all sectors of administration only to establish their absolute writ and supremacy. The mosques that had mushroomed under a well co-ordinated plan on every inch of Kashmir soil took over as nerve centres of terrorism for administrative management. The Muslims, conforming to and acquiescing in, rallying for militancy

related pogrom, stood in absolute solidarity with the militants directly owing allegiance to ISI dictating the entire course of happenings for the liquidation of the minorities already delineated as a vital part in the Zia plan.

The twin factors of sudden vertical crack in the Muslim rationality and absolute perishment of the state power led to the exodus[4] of the Kashmirian Hindus in massive numbers and magnitude signalling a deep-set crisis for the secular democracy that political managers claim India to be. The political statements made about the Kashmirian Hindus by all hues of anti-nationals and commmunalists had acted as a catalyst for the processes of liquidating them from the soil of Kashmir. The ominous developments prior to 19th January, 1990 contained sufficient potential to establish that a storm had already gathered for them and they, infact, were in the eye of the storm. The Hindus were killed, butchered and their properties vandalised by the hordes of vandals working out the format of a plan delineated in 14th Century.

A Kashmiri Pandit house at Sarai-bal in Srinagar was looted and set ablaze. The shop of D.N. Dhar on court road, Srinagar was looted in broad-day light. A *taba* belonging to a Hindu at Maharaj Bazar, Srinagar was denuded of all utensils and other articles and set to fire. Most of the Hindu shops in Ganda Singh building, Lal Chowk, Srinagar were put to a loot by the regimented hoodlums only in day-light. All liquor shops of the Kashmirian Hindus were looted and ravaged. But the same shops owned by the Muslims were left untouched. The Vishva Bharati Institution run and managed by the Kashmirian Hindus was blasted as it did not have a mosque for the Muslim girls to say their prayers.[5] The Hindus under a fiat were forbidden to put on a *tilak-mark*. Tolling of bells in temples was stopped. All hoardings everywhere were fiated to be painted green. Small wooden boards put up at crossings directed all to say *namaz* and 'not to discuss', all smacking of Muslim bigotry and fascism. People were fiated to sport beards and don themselves in traditional Kashmiri garb. Wrist watches as in Pakistan had to be worn on the right hand and the time set back by a half-hour only to correspond with that of Pakistan. In Kupwara, stray dogs were affixed with discs around their necks with the inscription 'Indian dogs' and in Khag effigies of the Indian soldiers were hung from trees.[6]

The Jammat-I-Tulba chief, Azim Inqalabi, a school teacher turned terrorist, nephew of the Education Secretary, J & K Government,

now retired, dealt out the final blow when he granted general amnesty to all Muslims[7] whom he characterised as traitors for consistently pursuing a policy of betrayal , but did not grant the same amnesty to the Kashmirian Hindus, who as per him, had a much murkier record than the Muslims. Though there were dissensions initially in regard to the treatment to be meted out to the Kashmirian Hindus, yet in ultimate analysis a policy of liquidation of the Hindus was agreed upon by all the terrorist outfits.

The Muslim terrorists motivated and frenzied by intolerance and religious prejudice launched upon a systematic campaign of liquidating the Hindu minorities. Big-sized posters purporting the Hindus to quit or get killed were pasted on the doors of the Kashmirian Hindu houses and gates of temples. Individual letters were written only to exhort them to march out. Telephone calls to the Hindus, both commoners and well-to-do, conveyed a barrage of invectives and final warning to quit. The Kashmirian Hindus out on roads and in their localities, usually mixed ones, were advised to march out as Kashmir had suffered a sea-change and so was not their cup of tea. Open threats blared out from mosques serving as the bastions of terrorism turned the current and tide against the Hindus, who got panicked, scared and awfully terrorised. Ultimately the *Daily Alsafa*, the main mouth-piece of terrorists in Kashmir, published a warning to the Hindus to quit within 48 hours or face consequences. The warning reads :

> 'Kashmiri Pandits responsible for duress against Muslims should leave the Valley within two days.'

The Kashmirian Hindus in doldrums witnessed the Muslim frenzy assuming menacing proportions. They saw the *Vitasta* (Kashmiri name of Jhelum river) going gory with their blood. They were virtual prisoners in the Muslim dominated localities brimming with unprecedented anti-India activities mobilised by the highly motivated elements. The Hindus terrorised by the gun-wielding terrorists were forcibly dragged to the mosques to participate in wild and frenzied anti-India fulminations and demonstrations. They, in fact, were forced at gunpoint to raise slogans denouncing India and also in praise of Islam. They were forced to form the frontline of demonstrators, because the militants, while firing at the security forces, reckoned that they would not fire back on them for fear of killing the Hindus. But firings did take place and many Hindus got killed.[8]

The milling crowds in a drift between the layers of illusion and

reality, non-vision and vision, frenzied and violent, raised slogans marking the reversal of positions, shared perceptions, and common bonds of pluralist fabric allowing rational freedom to all irrespective of religious and creedal distinctions. They highlighted a discernible trend suffused with bigotry, myopia, narrow-mindedness and more than most hatred, a trend directed, like a well orchestrated artillery barrage, at destroying the traditional foundations on which a plexus of enduring human values and beliefs had been based for thousands of years.

The cohesive and re-assuring slogan of 'long live Hindu, Muslim, Sikh Unity' had suddenly disappeared from the political parlance of the Muslim crowds, seeming to have given a go-by to their rational patterns of conduct as components of a civilised life, making bonfires of tyres at night, ensuring by coercion the participation of Hindu *Kaffirs*, in a state of high-pitched hysteria installing high voltage lamps at crossings only to serve as signal posts for the Afghan, Libyan, Iranian, Turanian, Saudi Arabian and Pak jets to land. All a dramatic blend of frenzy, ignorance, phantasy and naivity tinged green by the foot-lights of Islam.

The new slogans being mouthed with zooming zest presented an amazingly myopic content declaring war against the Hindus, threatening them with death and destruction, allowing them no lee-way, frightening them to quit and buzz off, stressing the establishment of the Prophet's governance and exposing low levels of cultural achievements. The slogans were :

(a) *Kashmir main rahna hai, Allah-ho-Akbar Kahna hoga.*
(If you choose to live in Kashmir, you will have to say Allah-o- Akbar).

(b) *Asi gachi Pakistan, Bata ros ta batanev san.*
(We want Pakistan, with Kashmiri Hindu women and without their men-folk).

(c) *Allah-o-Akbar, Musalmano jago Kafiro bhago, jehad aa raha hai.*
(Allah-o-Akbar, arise and awake Muslims, buzz off infidels, jehad is approaching.)

(d) *Kashmir kya banega – Pakistan*
(What will Kashmir be – Pakistan)

(e) *Zalimo O, Kafiro, Kashmir hamara chhod do*
(Ye cruel *Kafirs* (infidels) vacate our Kashmir)

(f) *Yahan kya chalega, Nizam - e - Mustafa*
(What will have sway here – Prophet's governance)

(g) Arise ye, fearless Momins,
For Russia has lost the race, Now the sword hangs on India's neck
Now it is Kashmir's turn.

(h) *Islam hamara maksad hai*
Kuran hamara dastur hai
Jehad hamara rasta hai.
(Islam is our destination
Koran is our constitution
Jehad is our way.)

(i) *Hamein kya chahye, NizameMustafa*
Kashmere main kya chalaiga, Nizame Mustafa
Hindustan mein kya chalaiga, Nizame Mustafa
(What do we need – Prophet's governance. What will have sway in Kashmir – Prophet's governance.
What will have sway in India – Prophet's governance.)

(J) *Ganga-Jamuna mein aag lagayenge*
(We will destroy Ganga and Yamuna)

The net product of the Islamic agenda as spearheaded by the Muslim crowds chanting slogans replete with hostility and hatred unto the Hindus was an exodus, a forced exodus, a diaspora, a crisis thrust on them, an ethnic cleansing, a manipulation for their genocide, completion of the pogrom conceived in 14th century.

In face of an armed onslaught the Kashmirian Hindus marched out of their native land only to save their skin and faith. Caring two hoots for their properties, movable and immovable, worth crores, they paid hefty sums to the truck and bus owners to carry them across the Bannihal tunnel to safer zones. The villagers, poor and destitute, allowed their cows with garlands on to stray away, but sold off their bulls for paltry sums only to quit their mother-land prowled about by monsters of murder, loot and arson. The Hindus from the border towns of Kupwara and Handwara in north of Kashmir were the first to flee followed by the teen-age girls from Srinagar and towns and hamlets in south of Kashmir. Flight of the Hindus from the millennia old homes and hearths had started much before the advent of Jagmohan on the political scene of Kashmir. The Kashmirian Hindus with tremendous literacy levels did not need a Jagmohan to pave way for their exodus, which as a crisis phenomenon is deeply

entrenched in their 'race memory'. The December, 1989 exodus is the fifth such exodus in the history of Kashmirian Hindus, who have been fleeing their land of birth under the armed onsalught of the proselytisers and Muslim zealots and never learning lessons from history. 'The Hindus were dealt a shattering blow, their lives hanging by a slender thread' liable to be snapped any moment. Swamped by unprecedented terror and delirium,' they landed on the streets of Jammu, shattered, battered, pounded, bludgeoned and bloodied. It was a distressing journey from their native homes to Jammu and elsewhere. Sad and morose, they were fish thrown out of water.

A well articulated canard was given currency that the Kashmirian Hindus chose to to be in self-exile, otherwise all was well with them and they had no reason to suspect the intentions of the Muslim majority. Stories were planted in the media that the Hindus were inspired to march out by Jagmohan, who had all the plans to liquidate the Muslims. The pith of the matter is that the vested interests with a view to propping up the terrorists by putting forth the thesis they are 'innocents', 'just trapped by ISI network' and 'rosy cheeked guys' have established agencies in Delhi and abroad only to feed the campaign designed to malign the Hindus and hold them responsible for the proliferation of terrorism in Kashmir. It is alleged that huge sums are provided to these agencies to lure and net individuals and vital sources to plant the canard to impute motives to the forcible exodus of the Hindus from their homes and hearths. There are some known persons with a track record of dubious politics busy in feeding the campaign from Delhi. They are the traducers of the Kashmirian Hindu community and have proved brazen faced to impute motives to their forced exodus[9] from their land of genesis.

Be it said with emphasis that the fundamentalist Muslims did not get lured into but consciously chose the path of terrorism taking it as an effective weapon to break loose from the so-called colonial fetters. Unarmed Hindus have been their first targets. How long will they go on killing and looting the Kashmirian Hindus? Sikander, the iconoclast, urged by Mir Maqbool Hamadani, led to the genocide of the Hindus. The Sayyids proved their worst tormentors. The chaks, the Mughals and the Afghans beat all records of barbarism in torturing them. The Dogra rule was no better. In 1931-32 , the Kashmirian Hindus were killed and ravaged. Even in secular India, they have not been allowed peace and respite by the Muslim marauders, who were ruthless in mowing down the cream of the Hindu society,

doctors, engineers, professors, administrative officers and barbaric, to loot, in raping their women-folk. Non-violent and unarmed, they fled their homes and hearths in face of armed onslaught and have been rendered refugees in their own country.

The Muslim terrorism signalling the death of Muslim rationality was an essential factor leading to their exodus. There was not a sane Muslim, tolerant and liberal in views, who dared denounce the Muslim terrorism with its thrust against the Hindus. All so-called liberals, intellectuals and forward-looking people, suffered a sudden demise and eclipse and have been flaunting long beards only to appease the terrorists, cringing when the terrorists wanted them only to bend, feeding the Muslims on the staple diet of *Azadi* synoymous with annexation to Pakistan and sustaining the laity and terrorists, mostly semi-literates, by fabrication of astounding theories ranging from intervention of the Muslim world to India going bankrupt as a result of continued insurgency and chaos.

There is a Tarkunde,[10] who deliberately ignored the Kashmirian Hindus, hapless victims of terrorism, only to formulate a thesis on atrocities basing it on his exclusive interview with a Muslim taxi-driver in Srinagar speaking volumes for his wisdom. He along with many other self-styled human rights activists contributed to the canard that the Kashmirian Hindus marched out of the Valley on their own, not because they were brutalised and hounded out under an armed onslaught. His formulation of the situation in the Valley is so biased that he describes atrocities and repression of the security forces as the root cause of terrorism in the Valley. The characterisation of the Muslim terrorists as 'chubby faced innocent youngmen' is astounding ignoring their heinous crimes, barbaric acts, ruthless killing of the unarmed Kashmirian Hindus and raping of their women-folk. Tarkunde is deliberately evasive, has seen and known facts, but smoke-screens them for ulterior motives to serve the ends of Royism.

There is a George Fernandes, who attributed the genesis and proliferation of Muslim terrorism to the dominance of bureaucracy by the Kashmirian Pandits.[11] He is the same person, who as the Minister of Railways, was about to sell India's nuclear technology to Libya for oil only to be foiled by the then Prime Minister of India, Morarji Desai.[12] He has had an acquaintance with Aman Ullah Khan and even sought his support and intervention for the solution of Kashmir tangle. Farooq Abdullah, the destroyer of Kashmir and one of the founding fathers of JKLF, happens to be his blue-eyed

boy. George could be held guilty of sending wrong signals to the terrorists, who as per reports just duped him. His attempts to wean them away from terrorist path ended in a fiasco rendering incalculable damage to the broader interests of Indian polity. V.P. Singh, Mufti Sayyid, the worst-ever hater of the Hindus, and George Fernandes only to pamper Muslims flouted all norms and set rules to recruit the Muslims to fill up the vacancies occurring in the wake of the flight of the Hindus from their homes and hearths in Kashmir. Had it been a movement for jobs, the terrorists should have given up arms in view of the promises held out to them by all manner of people. It is in reality a revolt against the Indian presence in Kashmir, a fundamentalist revolt for establishing an Islamic state in Kashmir, an armed revolt for ethnic cleansing. Facts speak and are out. No assiduous concealment of them will help in meeting the challenges thrown up by Muslim terrorism.

Then there are Khusros, Dhars, Roshas, Chopras, Mir Qasims Sozs and hosts of others, who have articulated their views on the present turmoil in Kashmir. They are all in unison to pave way for the establishment of Kashmir as an independent or semi independent state with soft borders enabling the Muslims, who, as per them, are emotionally fractured, to cross over to POK to meet their relations and contacts with a view to softening and molifying their otherwise frayed tempers. It is how the Indian intellegentsia is posing itself on the burning issue of Muslim terrorism out to destroy the secular fabric of India to tatters. Objectively, all of them seem to pave way for the severance of political relationship of Kashmir with the India Union and hand it over to Pakistan on a platter. As per reports, the document delineating such a dangerous position and stance was prepared by a three tier committee appointed at the behest of Janata Dal Government headed by V. P. Singh. And the document implicitly supporting secession or semi-independent status of Kashmir contains one line allusion, brief and succinct, to the Kashmirian Hindus that a fervent appeal will be made to them to return to their homes and hearths by all political parties, MPs, MLAs and men of public standing. The Kashmirian Hindus, be it said in plain terms, cannot think of returning to Kashmir unless it is cleansed of fundamentalist killers and treacherous secessionists out to erode the unity and integrity of sovereign, democratic and secular India.

Ayesha Kagal, Miss Baweja, Prem Shanker Jha, Kuldip Nayyar, Saif-ud-din Soz, Sunil Matoo, Rahul Singh and men of their ilk have

dished out the same trite and commonplace thesis that the Muslims bereft of democratic rights, starved of funds for development, deprived of opportunities and more than most the dominance of the Kashmirian Hindus in services were driven to the wall with no options left but to take up arms.

Basing their premise and approach on unfounded notions, they ignore the fact that the Muslim terrorists are no longer battling for restoration of democracy. They have a fundamentalist agenda for the genocide of the Hindus only to establish Kashmir as an Islamic ghetto. The Muslims in general as the dominant segment of the Kashmirian populace stifled democracy by not allowing the minisicule minority of the Hindus to exercise their right to vote like free citizens of democratic India. The Muslim United Front as a conglomeration of bigots and Hindu-baiters kicked up the dust of elections being rigged designed to discredit the Government of India and its institutions to bolster up its Islamic image for waging *jehad* against Hindus and the Indian presnece in Kashmir. Being leagues away from rational democratic temper, there was not a single Muslim, who expressed his resentment to and disapproval of jerrymandering of the constituencies where the Kashmirian Hindus had a political role for assertion.[13]

It is sheer misnomer to assert that the Muslims are poor and bereft and that is why they have risen in revolt and taken up arms. Government of India has so far pumped ninety thousand crores into Kashmir to effect the development of various sectors of Kashmir economy leading to a sea-change in the life and living standards of the Muslim masses. The tremendous boost of the economy has resulted in the high levels of prosperity and affluence that are enjoyed by the Muslims in general. They have been the only beneficiaries of land reforms at the expense of the Kashmirian Hindus, who were deprived of even their small holdings lending them support and succour. A negligible percentage of people lives below poverty line and only to grab grants from the Indian exchequer some classes of Muslims otherwise above poverty line have been put in the category.[14] There are no slums and *chawls* in Kashmir. Nobody is without a shelter and posh colonies inhabited by the Muslims have dizzied even the foreign mercenaries fighting battles for Islamic hegemony in Kashmir. The Muslims live on sumptuous food with meat as one of its main items. Nobody lives on *gur* and water'.

That the Kashmirian Hindus dominate the services is a sheer

half-truth. There are agencies working over-time to mislead the public opinion by inventing a farrago of lies and canards. The Muslims have absolute sway over services established by fraud and communal measures. The departments of Agricultrue, Horticulture, Tourism, Forest, Transport, Revenue, Home and Finance and more than most the Secretariat have absolute Muslim domination. The schools and colleges are staffed with third class M.A.s and M.Scs, mostly Muslims. The Department of Education was headed by three Muslim secretaries, who were mere matriculates. The Director General of Police, a Muslim, was a mere matriculate and was squarely responsible for Muslimisation of police force in J & K State. The Muslims comprise 1.37 lakh out of a 2.37 lakh government employment, when as per population ratio they comprise 60% of the total population of the state. How many Ladakhi Buddhists are in the main secretariat? How many Gujjars and Bakerwals are in the state employment?

The Kashmirian Muslims as per their history in time are given to the grabbing of the whole cake, and crying hoarse that they are poor, bereft and backward. The same bogey was raised by them in the time of Maharaja Hari Singh, who was forced to appoint Glancy Commission, which despite axing merit and achievements, did not uphold the Muslim contention of non-representation in services. And communal guidelines laid down by Glancy Commission are still pursued by the Muslim bureaucrats when education in the state is free from primary to post-graduate level.

Be it put that the share of the Kashmirian Hindus in central services is determined by their competitive and learning capacitites and skills. Central services have been open to all and anybody competing would find a job slot. The fact of the matter is that the Muslims did compete and failed to kiss success. The Muslim leaders handled the entire issue as per the rationale formulated by the Muslim bureaucracy in Kashmir and buttressed by the Plebiscite Front Resolution stressing the share of Muslims in Central Services as per their population ratio. But, the entire rationale is blantantly sectarian and violative of all constitutional provisos.

The Kashmirian Hindus in Central Services are by and large the same brights, who would have been doctors and engineers and other high-skilled professionals had they not been edged out by the Muslim rationale of discrimination, manipulation and sectarian criteria. The Kashmirian Hindus sat for various competitive exams conducted by various statutory bodies and qualified them. Have they grabbed the

job slots as the Muslims have been grabbing them in the state? Neither the Indian Constitution nor the state constitution does uphold the Muslim logic of 'population ratio' as a determining factor for recruitment to various strata of services. If the same logic is projected and applied to all other states of India, what will be the Muslim share in various state and Central Services? The Muslims rooted in blatantly communal approach to problems have openly expressed their malice and hatred unto the Kashmirian Hindus whom they betrayed by fanning communal fires leading to their exodus.

Mr. Saif-ud-din Soz hounded out from Kashmir despite his consistent pursuit of pro terrorist policies has been thoroughly rooted in Muslim myopia and is squarely responsible for the dissemination of many a canard against the Kashmirian Hindus. Being the campaign manager, he has been planting stories of the Hindu domination of services and the figures he has published in this regard smack of falsehood and motivation. Why did he not publish the figures when his party was in power in the state? His essential campaign veers round the strategy of providing a cover to the Muslim terrorists, who are up in arms for establishment of Nizam-e-Mustafa and have murdered Hindus in cold blood and hounded the micro-community out of Kashmir. The Muslim strategy has been to invent a tissue of lies and a web of canards only to mislead public opinion, which is fully aware of the betrayal of the ruling elite in Kashmir. The Government of J & K could be put under pressure to issue a white paper on the share of service slots held by various communities in the entire state only to give a lie to and nail down a deliberate canard to justify the religious war waged against the Hindus of Kashmir for their loot, murder and arson.

In 1990-91-92 Muslims have been appointed in various Central Services in open and flagrant violation of norms, rules and regulations at the behest of Raja of Manda (V.P.Singh), Mufti Sayyid and many Congress stalwarts hoping to normalise the explosive situation fuelled by vigorous communal elements and ISI subversives. A committee appointed with Mr. Bajpai as its chairman in collaboration with the Regional Manager of State Bank of India, Chief of the Post-offices, J & K Circle and Muslim bureaucrats out to erode the total structure of secularism in Kashmir made a hunt for Muslims to recruit them to the posts left vacant by the forced exodus of the Kashmirian Hindus. No advertisements were issued calling for applications from all the citizens of India.

Appointments were made on sectarian and religious grounds. Rules and norms were bent, flouted and violated. The Staff Selection Commission created under law worked to meet communal and sectarian ends. The Banking Service Board as a recruitment agency for various central banks side-tracked and blatantly violated its own set norms to recruit Muslims only. Thousands of Hindus suffering blues and greys of life in camps waiting for gainful employment were totally ignored. They had an inherent right to apply and compete. Why were they ignored? Why do not the Staff Selection Commission and Banking Service Recruitment Board pursue the same policy in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh where thousands of highly educated youth are without jobs and are sunk to the bottom level of poverty and deprivation? How has the Indian Parliament overlooked the functioning of such bodies as are off-shoots of law and are required to function within the parameters of law? Terrorism put on the pedestal of religious bigotry out to erode and destroy the authority of state and law is not to be bribed, but fought with a heavy hand and determined will.

The Kashmirian Muslims suffering from and afflicted with religious anxiety have a history of demolition of temples and breaking of idols. B.G. Verghese and Harvinder Baweja strained their every nerve to establish that temples were not desecrated and demolished during terrorist violence sweeping through the length and breadth of the Valley since 1990 and in the wake of December, 6 demolitions in Ayodhya.[15] The Kashmirian Muslims aided and abetted by the Islamised bureaucracy have committed heinous crimes by way of grabbing, desecrating, demolishing and setting ablaze the Hindu places of worship. The temple demolitions and destructions in the district of Anantnag in 1986 are still fresh in public memory. Hundreds of temples and shrines were razed to the ground, their properties as usual looted and then put to flames.

After December, 6, 1992, the Kashmir terrorists frenzied for establishment of Islamic state in Kashmir indulged in loot, desecration, demolition and arson of the temples. Scores of temples erected in the hoary past standing as testimony to the Hindu history of Kashmir have been ravaged and destroyed. Thirty one temples in Anantnag, three temples in Srinagar, Seven in Baramulla, one in Budgam, one in Kupwara, two in Rajouri and seven in Doda have been looted, damaged, partially damaged or burnt.

The temple standing within the cremation ground in Karan Nagar,

Srinagar was burnt and destroyed. Two Shiva temples in Anantnag were set afire. Five temples in Achabal, Anantnag were gutted by the Muslim bigots. The Kulavagishwari temple of Kulagam with its ancient origins closely linked with the Shaivite developments in Kashmir was put to flames. In Dooru, Anantnag, two Ganesh temples were destroyed. The Vitasta temple in Verinag as old as the gushing waters of the river Jehlum was burnt. Uma Nagri Temple in Brari Anagan, Anantnag was looted and burnt. Two ancient shrines in Hanad, Chowalgam, Anantnag were set to flames. The temple at Devasar, Anantnag was destroyed. Three temples at Lok Bhawan in Anantnag suffered destruction at the hands of Muslim vandals. Lok Bhawan as a temple city has found mention in Kalhan's *Rajtarangini.* A very ancient temple of Tripursundari along with three *dharamshalas* at Khanabarni in Anantnag was burnt to ashes. Nandkishwar Bhairav Nath Temple at Sumbal in Baramulla was set on fire, but was saved, suffering the scars of ravage and plunder. Kunzar temple in Baramulla was completely gutted.[16]

A report says "The Muslim militants have destroyed at least 40 temples and 150 houses during the past five days, even as pro-militant political leaders urged Muslim countries to enforce economic blockade on India for the Ayodhya incidents. Most of the incidents have been reported from rural Kashmir, especially Anantnag district in the south and Baramullah and Kupawara districts in the north. In Srinagar city, a temple and seven houses at Banamulla and a cremation shed at Karan Nagar, migrant houses at Jawaharnagar, Natipora and some other localities were burnt. In villages, like Wadipora in Kupawara, Chinigund, Verinag, Peba, and Dooru in Anantnag, Shergund in Baramulla, Kokernag and Chak-i-Narain Das, entire settlements of minority houses, schools, *dharamshallas* and *ashramas* were reduced to ashes."[17]

B.G. Verghese and Harinder Baweja as apologists to Muslim fundamentalism and terrorism in Kashmir[18] aiming at the destruction of the secular roots of the country as a whole planted a canard in the media that all temples in Kashmir were safe as an inference drawn from the ones they might have seen standing and safe. No pleading on part of them for the safety of temples in Kashmir can absolve the Muslim terrorists of the crimes and brutal acts of inflicting damage and scars on Hindu places of worship. They are out to complete the pogrom of genocide of the Hindus and destruction of their temples that were unleashed by the bigoted Muslims, urged by

the Sayyids motivated by the design of transmuting the religious complexion of Kashmir. No such canard planted in sheer violation of journalistic ethics can establish the secular credentials of Muslim terrorists, who have proved as barbaric as invading hordes from North. Their intolerance is fully established and intolerance by and large as a reflex act of the Muslims in general is proved to the hilt the day the Hindus, 2% minority, were forcibly made to quit their land of birth leaving behind their properties, mobile and immobile, worth crores of rupees only to be looted and ravaged. The forcible exodus of the Kashmirian Hindus is and will be an indelible stain on the Muslim majority of Kashmir.

Amitabh Mattoo,[19] the latest to join the bandwagon of the apologists to Muslim terrorism and frenzy, has been busy in the spread of same tissue of lies with a view to putting up a defence to the Muslim crimes of killing the non-violent Hindus and looting, ravaging and burning their properties. As reported in media, his father, a conservator of forests, retired and reemployed, was brutally attacked in his palatial residence in Tulsi Bagh, Srinagar by the armed terrorists. Running for life, panting and pale, he gate-crashed into the house of a Sikh neighbour for refuge. Ultimately he reportedly made a truce with the Muslim terrorists by paying them ransom money as is paid by all living in present-day Kashmir. Ambitabh Mattoo must prove intelligent to understand that the Kashmirian Hindus are a patriotic community and could not have stayed on in Kashmir at the mercy of the barbaric hordes of terrorists and their cohorts and much less to feed the machine of terrorism by payments of regular ransom. They abandoned their homes and hearths only after Hindu lawyers, judges, professors, doctors and administrative officers were barbarically murdered and their women-folk gang-raped, sliced into bits and a cast off to vultures. He should desist from pandering the Muslim canard that the Hindus buzzed off their home-land as they were lured by promises of plots in Jammu and were provided with trucks to move out. Let plots and trucks be provided to all the Muslims in Kashmir and ask them to settle in camps and hovels. Will they move out? There are many ostriches in India, who pander the Muslim irrationality ignoring the armed onslaught launched against the Hindus for ethnic cleansing. And Mani Shanker Aiyar caps them all.

The Muslim terrorists and their think-tank – doctors, lawyers, teachers and engineers are maintaining as a matter of design a token

presence of the Hindus on the soil of Kashmir only to stave off the accusation that the ongoing terrorism in the Valley is fundamentalist in its essentials. That there are 20,000 Hindus living in Kashmir [20] is a sheer mental exercise unrelated to actual facts. As per authentic reports, there are few thousand Hindus living in Kashmir and the fact of the matter is that most of them inhabit the high security zone away from the terrorist sway and fury. As mere captives, they are at the mercy of the terrorists and are tolerated till they pay 13% of their monthly incomes only to feed terrorism and bigotry. They can be gobbled up any time the ISI hounds decide upon sounding their death-knell or Muslim terrorists pounce upon them only to satiate their avid thirst for the blood of *Kafirs* (infidels). Is there any letup in the brutal killings of hapless Hindus? Their killings continue unabated. Three such brutal killings were reported in the media in June 1993. How H. N. Wanchoo, projected as a human rights activist serving the Muslim insurgency was ruthlessly butchered at the behest of ISI saboteurs must serve as an eye-opener to the popinjays of various outfits holding fast to the fallacious idea of Muslim rationality. The token presence of the Hindus on the soil of Kashmir has misled many a wiseacre extolling it as a testimony to Muslim tolerance and accommodation.[21] That nearly 3 lakh Hindus under Muslim intolerance and armed onslaught ran for life only to take shelter in safer zones out-side the purlieux of Kashmir has completely exploded the myth of Muslim tolerance and accommodation.

There are 30,000 Sikhs living in Kashmir. They are all on tenter-hooks and despite Simranjit Singh Mann's intervention, they have been subjected to killings and conversion.[22] The Sikhs of Kashmir have been putting their landed and structural properties to distress sale at throw-away prices. Aware of the Muslim savagery, they have shifted their women-folk to Jammu and other parts of the Punjab. What has saved the Sikhs from total decimation is the nexus between the Muslim and Sikh terrorists pursuing the same objective of balkanisation of India as delineated by their mentors across the border.

The Kashmirian terrorists rooted in hate-syndrome of all ethnic groups not subscribing to the faith of Islam have instilled so much of fear in the Sikhs that 2500 Sikh families have quit the Valley under their armed fundamentalist onsalught.[23] The Sikhs are by and large convinced that they shall have to abandon their homes and hearths en masse like their Hindu compatriots sooner or later. The pro-Pak armed outfits like JEI/HUM have already Islamised the

Kashmiri society. The Sikhs view with great concern the continued burning of the properties of the Hindu migrants and the desecration of the *Gurdwara* at Rainawari by the Muslim terrorists on May 28, 1991.[24]

The gun-wielding Muslim terrorists have shattered peace of the Sikhs in the Valley. As many as 30 Sikhs including three women have been ruthlessly slaughtered. A Sikh army officer, Lt. Col. G. S. Bali and his brother Surinder Singh were kidnapped from Badgam and put to brutal killings on October 21, 1991. Scores of Sikh girls have been kidnapped and converted to Islam. The kidnapping and conversion of Satinder Kaur d/o Bhupender Singh r/o Khwaja Bagh, Baramulla and Surinder Kaur d/o Dalip Singh r/o Alucha Bagh, Srinagar have been reported in the media. Even Simranjit Singh Mann's appeals to secure their release from the clutches of the Muslim terrorists failed to evoke any response. The Sikh organisations of the Punjab have also conveyed appeals for freeing of the Sikh girls, but to no avail.[25]

The Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, a fierce terrorist outfit, has imposed ban on the purchase of the Sikh properties in the Valley. The ban fiats were issued when two prominent doctors, Daljeet Singh and Tejander Singh, disposed of their immobile properties to Muslims.[26] The terrorists in particular and rabid Muslims in general believe in grabbing Hindu properties. So, why purchase them ?

The Shia Muslims, 600,000 strong, despite numbers, are equally apprehensive of the Wahabi character of on-going terrorism in the Valley. Living in absolute fear and panic, they know the sword of the Sunni-Muslims will take their toll after the Hindus are completely obliterated and wiped out. That 'after infidels the sword has to fall on the Shia Muslims' (Kafiras pata chay rafizas lar i.e. after the infidle (Hindu), it is the turn of Shia Muslim who has to be finished.) is in their 'race memory.' At the behest of a Shia-Muslim cleric, the Shia-Muslim boys were exported to POK camps for training in arms. Some of them were imparted training in camps set up on the Iranian borders. On their return, they were discovered dis-illusioned by the Sunni terrorists and were even divested of their lethal weapons. As most of the Shia-boys failed to operate on ground, twelve of them were brutally murdered. The Shia-Muslims have become all the more suspect in view of the Iranian position on Kashmir. They have weapons, but are keeping them only for self-defence. The few Hindus staying back in Kashmir have been provided safety and succour in

villages dominated by the Shia-Muslims. What has been remarkable that even after the enactment of Land Reforms in Kashmir, the Shia-Muslim tenants under the instructions of Late Agha Sahib of Badagam continued to pay the share of the produce to their Hindu land-owners at a scale not provided for under the oppressive laws. Like Hindus, the Shia Muslims have equally been put to religious persecution. There was hardly an occasion when *Tazia* processions were not stoned by the Sunnis. The fate of the Shia Muslims in Pakistan has proved a wet blanket for them.

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CHAPTER NINETEEN

Muslim Fundamentalism

The Muslim terrorists of all hues hold aloft the banner of Muslim fundamentalism to rally the Muslim masses for establishment of Islamic state cleansed of other ethnic groups called *kafirs* (infidels) in their parlance. Brain washed in POK camps, they let loose a reign of terror to frighten away the Hindus, who as per formulations in Zia-plan, represented India and its value system in Kashmir. The unholy and vicious combine of Islam and Klashnikov led to the near-total weeding out of all vestiges of humanistic culture of Kashmir with its roots deeply embedded in the hoary past of Kashmir. The forces of religious bigotry enjoy absolute sway over Kashmir marking a water-shed in the history of Muslims having chosen to bid adieu to indigenous values of humanism for tribalism, barbarity and medieval thought nuances.

The Jamaat-i-Islami upholding the medieval thought structure as its guiding-star seeped the virus of Muslim communalism and worst brand of bigotry into the otherwise healthy social and cultural pattern of Kashmir standing for tolerance, non-violence, mutual accommodation and good-will. The organisation directly linked with the Jamaat-i-Islami of Pakistan consistently worked for realisation of Pak-objectives in Kashmir, both political and religious. With Muslims as the predominant section of the populace, it made inroads into the entire polity of Kashmir with a design to realise secession of Kashmir from the Indian Union by whipping up religious frenzy for *jehad*. In the process, the organisation earned patronage from the Muslim first generation learners, limited in vision and devoid of depth, for establishment of Prophet's governance. The base of the organisation found entrenchment and consolidation with the active participation of the rulers that be.

The establishment of massive plethora of primary and middle-level schools in areas where education and schooling, prior to 1947, were the rarest commodity led to the creation of a mass of

school teachers, mostly low level matriculates and middle passes, nearly semi-literates, falling into the trap of Jamaatist propaganda, vicious and poisonous in approach and content. Highly motivated and viciously biased, they poisoned the growing mind-set of the blooming buds at an early age. Utterly incompetent and worthless in matters of initiating them in educative processes, they as per their orientation doled out misconceived ideas about religion and its role for islamization pogrom. The college and higher secondary school teachers working under the impact of Jamaat-i- Islami found encouragement at the level of Muslim bureaucracy committed to the same myopic ideals. Mohammad Shafi, a Minister in Sheikh's and Farooq's cabinets, with a track record of turn-coat politics and deep-set commitments to Jamaat-i-Islami, finally took comfort in the lap of Muslim fundamentalism only to nourish it from a seedling to a full branched-out tree. He in his capacity as a minister of education not only planted Jamaat workers in educational institutions of all levels but provided them with political shield and patronage. He was the person, who confronted the Shiekh, when government orders were issued to ban all Jamaat-run *madarsas* in the valley of Kashmir.

The Jamaat-i-Islami as an organisation spearheading Muslim bigotry and parochialism established its own network of *Madarsas* (schools) and study circles running into thousands. Its aims were political and instruments to realise them were *jehad*, anti-Hindu persuasions and myopic conceptual frame. The thought structure as upheld and propagated by it was in direct opposition to the indigenised Islam, which had firmer roots in the conceptual ambience of the risis and non-sectarian *Sufis.* That is why average Muslims assumed hostility unto the organisation including its interpretations of the Holy Text. Operating with single pointedness and with no forces to counter them, the motivated cadres of the organisation corrupted the mind-set of the semi-literates working in educational institutions and newly sprung up professional colleges. The ordinary employees with least educated mind finding slots in higher echelons of power structure with the aid of two seniority lists and other communal criteria growing ambitious of a religious role took refuge under the shield of highly virile and aggressive expressions of Islamic resurgence and blind-folded ideological frame of Jamaat-i-Islami. What was worst for the Muslims as a community that the newly born educated elite of doctors, engineers, professors and affluent businessmen with links abroad got rivetted to the medieval thoughtstructure ignoring the

scientific orientation that they were expected to develop by getting a brush with the broad spectrum of scientific knowledge and technological developments as a result of greater chances of their exposure to such developments with their major impact on developing societies.

The Muslim lawyers rooted in absolute Muslim bigotry pandered the dictates of the Jamaat-i-Islami to establish the Shariat courts. The Muslims in general were issued a fiat to take their law suits to the Shariat courts for decisions. With its absolute abhorrence for anything liberal and modern, the Molvis of the Jamaat held Shariat courts to settle disputes ranging from *talaq* to legal suits. What is astounding that the Muslim lawyers succumbed to the blind forces of Jamaat bidding farewell to and parting ways with modern interpretations of law from non-sectarian and liberal perspectives. Most of the Shariat courts are said to be bossed over by the Muslim terrorists, who are by and large semi-literates and the Muslims in general submit to the decisions of such courts speaking volumes for the Muslim mind.

The Shariat courts are presided over by one Abdul Rahman War, who flourished under the direct patronage of Mohammad Shafi, a minister in Sheikh's and Farooq Abdullah's cabinets. Harbouring hate-love relations with the Minister, he most of the time worked as his hireling executing his disruptive designs and sometimes deflected away from him only to find refuge in various political formations suiting his personal gains and ambitions. Rahman War fought elections on the ticket of the Muslim United Front, but failed to make it to the Assembly. Having forged firm links with the Muslim terrorists and other ISI sponsored subversives, Rahman War was installed as the Chief custodian of the Muslim religious conscience. He led to the establishment of a massive net-work of Shariat courts littered over the valley of Kashmir.

One branch of such Shariat courts functioning at Soyibugh on the fringes of the city of Srinagar was presided over by Rahman War to hear a plaint filed by the locals against a terrorist who had sex with a cow – a beastly act, to say the least. The case was heard and the Shariat court held the terrorist guilty and was punished. But the punishment could not be executed against the gun-totting terrorist (a Mujahid to Muslims), for obvious reasons. The cow having suffered the lechery of a brute was declared as polluted and hence to be killed with specific orders to the Muslims not to eat her flesh. Under a fiat of the Shariat court, the polluted cow was pushed down a ditch

killing her instantaneously. The owner of the cow recovered the carcass, hacked it into pieces and sold it to the Muslims.

These are their "great" Shariat courts !

The doctors with patients littered round them, groaning in pain and agony, needing their utmost care and attention, said *namaz* in the wards of government run hospitals and institute of Medical Sciences and devoted their vigour and energies to the construction of mosques in hospitals and that too with money from public exchequer, least bothering about their professional ethics. Fleecing patients at their privately run clinics, they as a device of fraud and deceit exhibited unprecedented zest for Islam and its ascendancy and as patients of religious paronnoia raised a bogey of Islam in danger spearheading religious bigotry and narrowmindedness as a remedy to the socio-political problems.

The university and college teachers mostly hailing from the homes of first generation learners, obviously limited in eye range and lacking in mellowed perspective, fell a prey to the Jamaatist pogrom of the genocide of Hindus and their conversion as an alternative to genocide and also secession from India, despite socio-politico-economic resurgence as a boon of accession to the democratic polity of India. Despite a university, there is hardly a Muslim deserving the appellation of an intellectual as academic excellence and depth are no priorities. One Qayum Rafique, Head of the Department of History, University of Kashmir, has been withdrawing his published thesis *Sufism in Kashmir* from the market under Islamic onslaught as the book thoroughly exposes some vital facets of Medieval Islam in Kashmir. The university and college teachers have been responsible to a larger extent for the spread of Jamaat tentacles deep into the Muslim fabric by providing leadership role to the organisation rooted in absolute religious bigotry and obscurantism.

The Muslim engineers living in posh colonies displaying glitz and glamour of ill gotten wealth and riches have bred corruption, disseminated corruption and established corruption as the foundation stone of the Kashmirian society. Most of them being the products of post-1960 era with a short history of education failed to rise above the moribund ideological frame and continued to owe allegiance to any trend of thought manifesting Khomeini brand of adventurism and religious resurgence with little persuasions for rationalist approach to the analysis of world developments especially in the domain of science, technology and positive thought. The band of engineers

patronised Jamaat and its parochial ideology by way of augmenting its finances from the loot they had made of development funds. The state government has no hold on the disbursement of moneys for execution of development projects and sufficient amounts of it go to the Muslim engineers, who feed the insurgency in Kashmir.

Suffice it to say that the so called Muslim educated elite essentially rooted in medievalism and archaic ideologies with no proclivities for rationalism and scientific temper wrought havoc with the Kashmirian fabric. They could have served as beacon lights for the onward march of society at large, but they got stuck up in the pools and puddles of Muslim backwardness, parochial thought ways and obscurantist models for socio-economic regeneration. As patrons of Muslim extremism and Muslim insulation, they threw a spanner to the pace of development bringing about a sea-change in the Muslim society as a whole in terms of socio-economic dynamics fearing the end of their supremacy over the Muslim social set-up having acquired new structured hierarchy. That they shied away from contemporary techno-cultural interface for the achievement of healthy perspectives in tune with the socio-political demands speaks for the regressive Muslim mind keen to get shrunk back into the cocoon of stinking backwardness and myopia.

The agenda of Muslim insurgency was opened up with archaic fundamentalist slogans sending deep shivers down the spine of the Hindu minorities. It marked genocide of Hindus and hounding them out of their home-land. The main butts of attack were manifestastions of civilisational growth and development. All liquor shops excepting those belonging to the Muslims were raided and bottles looted only to be enjoyed in the privacy of dens. All video-parlours were fiated to be closed. Anybody daring flout the fiat was to be sprayed over with bullets. Cinema halls were padlocked. The Muslim women were fiated to be clad in black veils. Those defying the dress codes were subjected to brutal atrocities. Their tresses of hair were 'raped' and what was worst that acid was sprinkled over girls moving about without veils. Tailors were ordered to sew such clothes as would be in conformity with their fiats. Cigarette smoking was decreed to be stopped. Cosmetic shops were closed. The cassettes of film songs ever on in buses were totally banned and replaced by cassettes replete with venomous contents of Muslim bigotry and *jehad*. The entire Valley was flooded with mini-sized or big-sized wooden boards with the Quaranic injunctions exhorting to wage a *jehad* against

infidels, God recompensing the *Chazis* with abundant fruits on the earth and those dying in the process becoming martyrs. Any Muslim saluting a Hindu by uttering 'namaskar' was threatened with death. At the commencement of terrorism dress codes were issued even for Hindu girls, who disobeyed and openly flouted them. The Hindus declined to accept any fiat from any ignoramus posing himself as a self-styled law-giver. Be it said that the Hindus essentially a community of micro-numbers with no guns to wield expressed their high pitched hatred and comprehensive contempt for the terrorist fiats issued by semi-literates with low and murky records of morals, (and muslims have already had a taste of it), but majority of Muslims obeyed the fiats in letter and spirit sensing in them resurgence and glory of Islam and Islamic law but actually sinking them in the quagmire of tribalism, fascism and irrationality.

The fundamentalist onslaught touched a new apogee when war was waged on books as repositories of knowledge and learning. Libraries throughout the Valley were ransacked only to denude them of volumes not conforming to the brand of knowledge upheld by the Jamaat-i-Islami fanatics.[1] Darwin as an exponent of evolution was exorcised as Islamic concept of creation is in sharp opposition to evolutionary perspective.[2] All volumes dealing with Darwin's Theory of Evolution were removed from library shelves only to be destroyed. Jamaat-oriented teachers organised a protest against the continuation of Darwin and his Theory on curricula of under-graduate and post-gradate courses of study thereby underpinning their absolute contempt for rational expressions to explain the evolutionary growth and development of man.

In sheer Nazi fashion, two thousand books from the library of the University of Kashmir were withdrawn,[3] thus pruning and denuding it of most of the books of Shakespeare, Kant, Shopenhaeur, John Milton, H. G. Wells and George Bernard Shaw. The tomes on the Indian philosophy as contribution to the realms of global philosophies were special butts of target and were withdrawn and mercilessly destroyed.[4] The Jamaat-i-Islami launched a barbaric onslaught on N.C.E.R.T. books with their main accent on rationalism and cultivation of scientific temper. A library located in Batamalloo, a den of Muslim terrorists, was looted and books destroyed. Some foot-path sitters selling books on Marx, Angels and volumes on progressive literature were manhandled and books looted. The library of the Information Centre run by Government of India was looted

and then put to flames and leaping fires fed by the looted books after the fashion of Halaku Khan.

Tej Bhan a prominent Hindu writer with a number of publications to his credit was brutally attacked by the Jamat-i-Islami hoodlums for his views supporting the evolutionary and sociological developments of man as unit of social fabric. His publication, *Pahchan* was torn to pages in the streets of Baramulla, Kashmir and what was worst that the police instead of providing him protection pounced on him and put him in lock-up for three months. The inhuman treatment meted out to a thinking being attracted the attention of the Indian Parliament, which thoroughly debated the issue of Tej Bhan, his publication and his unwarranted detention and stating it as as a gruesome attack on freedom of expression in a liberal democracy was unanimous in his unconditional release.[5] This was how the Jamaat-i-Islami cadres, highly biased and narrow-minded, set an agenda for the worst brand of regimentation to the destruction of all rational views and expressions.

The Jamaat hoodlums forcibly captured the canteen hall of the University of Kashmir with a view to converting it into a mosque. The Department of Central Asian Studies as a seminary of Muslim fundamentalism conducted myopic and lopsided researches from Islamic perspectives to the detriment of broad historical and cultural vision forming the plinth for resurgence of super-structural values leading to social and religious cohesiveness and harmony. The Iqbal Institute functioning under the aegis of the University of Kashmir has set pace for all myopic, narrow-minded and non-secular activities aiming at secession, social disharmony and religious hatred.

Indiscriminate Killings of the Minority

The terrorists operating under the umbrella of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front were the first to resort to the dastardly killings of the Kashmirian Hindus. They in actual praxis are the same myopic, fundamentalist and indoctrinated as the droves of others affiliated to Hizbul Mujahideen, Allah Tigers, Ikhwan-Ul-Muslimeen, Janbaz Force, *et al.* Rooted in the hate Hindu syndrome, the Muslim terrorists as per Zia-plan postulations started on a virile campaign of harassing, intimidating and terrorising the Hindus making it amply clear that the Republic they nursed in their mind had no place for Hindus and others not

subscribing to the faith of Islam. The agenda upheld by the JKLF terrorists might be the establishment of an Independent Kashmir, which for all practical purposes is synonymous with annexation to Pakistan. The Hindus as an ancient community of Kashmir were denied any station and role-model in the Republic establishing that it had to come up as an Islamic State. Subscribing to 'ethnic cleansing', the JKLF terrorists equipped with the highly sophisticated weaponry took to the wanton killing and butchering of the Hindus the same way as fish take to water.

The brute gaining supremacy in the Muslim terrorists owing allegiance to Pakistan-sponsored outfits of all shades was hailed with loud applause and appreciation by the Muslims, especially their so called educated elite as a remarkable departure from the Hindu dominated Kashmirian ethos thereby establishing the crucifixation of reason and rationality as guides to a balanced, well-meaning and rational demeanour for purposes of living a corporate social life. The killings at first appeared selective, but in time gained the fury and frequency of a hurricane leading to the mass exodus of the hapless Hindus.

The Muslim terrorists operating from mosques and concrete hide-outs said to be built with government moneys in Muslim localities put not fewer than fifteen hundred Hindus to bullets and torture killings. Some were brutally strangulated with steel wires while many others were hanged from trees till they were dead. Some were burnt alive while many were cruelly lynched and fleeced. In most cases, eyes of the victims were barbarically gouged out repeating the medieval tortures inflicted on the Hindus by their Muslim captors. The kidnapped Hindus pushed into the terrorist established underground hospitals manned by government employed doctors operating under an over-all command of Dr. A. A. Guru, now slain, were subjected to the atrocity of blood-draining and cast off only to await death. The Hindu victims of the Muslim brutality were slaughtered, and their body-limbs broken or dis-membered. The Hindus, who were captured, were beaten black and blue and then thrown off as dead into the flowing rivers to meet their watery graves. Many Hindus were straightaway thrown alive into rivers to get drowned and killed. Many were tortured by branding with red-hot iron bars. Tongues of many victims were cruelly chopped off, hands and feet cut off and bosoms, foreheads and skulls battered and broken with axes and blunt weapons.

Mr. Tika Lal Taploo, a prominent leader of Bhartiya Janata Party, was sprayed over with bullets in a lane nearby his house causing terror in the entire Hindu dominated locality. His popularity with the Muslims of the area got established when they in considerable numbers joined his funeral procession. The Muslim shops remained closed to mourn his death. But a word from the command circle room led to the sudden opening of shops.

Mr. Nila Kanth Ganjoo, a retired Sessions Judge, was gunned down in the Hari Singh High Street in broad day light. Lying in a pool of blood, with clusters of Muslims watching the ghastly murder, all in hilarious and up-beat mood, the police prevaricating to arrive at the scene of murder and quite unusually nobody lifting his body or covering it with a sheet of cloth, the real Kashmiriyat appeared in the throes of being born. The charge against the slain judge was that he had sentenced Maqbool Butt, a Chinese and Pakistan trained spy and terrorist, to death for the gruesome murder of a Hindu intelligence officer, Ram Chand, whom he had chopped into bits, put in a sack and then thrown off. The judge had held him guilty of murder on the basis of the recorded statements from twenty-two witnesses, who were Muslims, one and all. The Hindu judge was brutally slain and the Muslim witnesses were granted amnesty.

A prominent lawyer, Mr. P. N. Bhatt, hailing from Anantnag, was mercilessly killed by pumping bullets into his face thereby exploding his skull. The Muslims inhabiting the neighbourhood of the scene of foul murder, a lane, chuckled and whispered, 'another is felled'. Mr. Bhatt's popularity with the Muslims could not save him from the terrorist wrath and not a single Muslim offered condolences on his brutal killing. Instead it was hailed as a victory for Islam.

Mr. Lassa Koul, Director Doordarshan Kendra, Srinagar, was put to bullets by the JKLF terrorists near the gate of his house at Bemina, Srinagar, where his old and ailing parents lived. The Doordarsan Kendra is infested with lots of employees, who have known anti-national credentials and are reportedly responsible for the murder of the Director. The then Deputy Minister of Information and Broadcasting has been allegedly responsible for the induction of such subversive elements into the Doordarshan Kendra, Srinagar.

The gruesome murder of the Kashmirian Hindus at the hands of the JKLF terrorists is proof sufficient to establish that they are communally motivated to cleanse Kashmir of ethnic groups not

affiliated to the Islamic faith. They declared war on the Hindus, who are un-armed and non-violent, only to annihilate and decimate them, kill and maraud them, loot and plunder them. Yet there are Indian ostriches to label them as secular. What a noxious misuse of the word secular ! Could it be asked as to how it was necessary to kill and maraud Hindus ? How would it assist in the processes of establishing an Independent Kashmir? Was Independent Kashmir meant for Muslims only ?

The genocide of the Hindus started by the JKLF barbarians was continued unabated by the numerous outfits vigorously executing Pak designs in Kashmir. The Hindus were maimed, mauled, brutally axed and put to bullets. The hateful brutalities inflicted in the name of Islam and Prophet's governance have added new chapters to the book of barbarism and medievalism.

Mr. Dilip Kumar, a young man of twenty-nine years, hailing from Zainpora, was kidnapped, his dentures hammered out and twelve bullets pumped into his body.

Mr. Bal Krishen Tutoo of Sheshiyar, Habbakadal was fired upon and grievously injured and in a critical condition carried to SMHS Hospital, Srinagar, a den of terrorists, where Muslim doctors in utter glee and callousness did not care to attend on him, thus allowing him to kiss death, marking an eclipse of medical ethics in face of Muslim ethics. There were scores of Hindus who died for want of medical care in the government hospital infested with psychopaths masquerading as doctors.

The barbarous terrorists killed Prof. Nila Kanth Lala, M.A. (History) M.A. (Economics) M.A. (Pol. Science), B.Ed, a veteran teacher, in the early hours of morning when he along with his family was boarding a truck to buzz off. The terrorists were none other than his students, whom he had nurtured and initiated only to drive away the brute from them. But the brute remained only to take his toll. In his capacity as a veteran teacher, much in demand, he entered hundreds of Muslim homes to teach and humanise their sons and daughters and that is how he was recompensed. Not a single Muslim shed a tear on his death. What a sad commentary on the Muslim parents whose wards Prof. Lala had initiated to enable them to live sixty years as adults and ten years as children !

Mr. Brij Nath Kaul of Shopian in South Kashmir, a driver in Agriculture University, Shalimar, Srinagar was kidnapped from his residential quarter along with his wife. Koul in medieval fashion was

tied by his legs with the jeep in which the terrorists were travelling. The gory spectacle was witnessed by hundreds of god-fearing Muslims, who in medieval fashion yelled in utter glee that his head was shattered, his leg was broken, his eye was smashed and his intestines were out. The grisly and ghastly murder of the Kashmiri Pandit represented a page from the palimpset of Medieval Islam high-lighting a true facet for Kashmiriyat projected by Farooq Abdullah, Saif-ud-din Soz, Ali Shah Geelani and more than most by Prof. Abdul Gani.

Brij Nath Shah in his fifties hailing from Kupwara was killed by strangulation. He had got his name tattooed on his fore-arm and the terrorists erased his name by peeling off the flesh from his fore-arm. The peeled off flesh was preserved to be used as plaster for the edifice of Nizam-e-Mustafa.

Mr. Chaman Lal Pandit, a teacher by profession, hailing from Badgam, was assured of full protection by his Muslim neighbours and that was how he stayed on in his native village teaching the Muslim learners only to draw them out of the cesspool of perpetuated ignorance by imparting them liberal education. He was kidnapped by the Muslim terrorists, killed and his body thrown on road-side to invite vultures. Not a single Muslim turned up even for condolences. Their assurances for his safety vanished like a whiff of vapour.

Five Klashnikov wielders forcibly barged into the house of Mr. Ashwani Kumar Garyali, Chattabal, Srinagar and fired point blank at him leaving him in a pool of blood. His father, weeping and wailing, rushed to the local police station for a vehicle to carry him to hospital. The S.H.O., a Muslim, avoided and prevaricated and the poor father went on begging him for a vehicle. The Muslim officer taunted the Kashmiri Pandit, perhaps, not realising that he was a part and parcel of the genocide of Hindus.

The same terrorists kidnapped Messers Chaman Lal Koul and Som Nath Raina, and strangulated them to death.

Mr. Ashok Kumar, a young man of thirty years, hailing from Pulwama, was kidnapped by armed Muslim terrorists and broke all his body parts. Imploring for mercy, the terrorists carried him to the main crossing of the road and gouged his eyes with steel bars in presence of hundreds of Muslims got collected to witness the gruesome spectacle.

Mr. Ashok Kumar Qazi, 32year old, was caught hold of by the terrorists on the main road of Tankipora, Srinagar and was mercilessly

beaten with iron rods and huge sticks and dragged into a lane where his legs were broken and was thrown into a drain, shrieking and gasping. Nobody picked him up and the terrorists re-appeared on the scene only to shoot him to death.

Mr. Ramesh Kumar Bhatt hailing from Shopian was kidnapped from SMHS Hospital, less of a hospital and more a terrorist den, and was subjected to the atrocity of breaking his legs, chopping off his tongue and inflicting burns by cigarettes. He was rescued by CRPF jawans from the riverbed where he was cast off in a state of unconsciousness by the cruel terrorists. He is a pulsating proof of Muslim terrorism and barbarity.

Mr. Avtar Krishen, hailing from Pulwana, was kidnapped and kept in captivity for a number of days. He was subjected to torture by cigarette burns and by peeling off his skin. Finally the *Kafir's* abdomen was ripped open and thrown off on a road side, thus marking a victory for Islam.

Mr. R. K. Razdan, a resident of Chattabal, Srinagar was kidnapped and fleeced with a plastic insulated telephone wire. He fell unconscious and the terrorists taking him as dead threw him into the Jehlum. Gaining consciousness, Razdan crept towards the road only to be rescued by the BSF Jawans. His body bore cigarette burns and deep-cut wounds inflicted by sharp-edged weapons.

Mr. Man Mohan Bhatt of Qazi Hamam, Baramulla, was taken by some of his Muslim friends to a tea-shop for a cup of tea. He was assaulted upon and kept in captivity and killed. His dead body was thrown from a vehicle on the road. All joints of his body were battered. There were multiple injuries on the muscles of his arms and was put to bullets as well.

Mr. A.K. Raina, Deputy Director, Food and Supplies, Srinagar was killed by the terrorists in his office chambers. Raina lay in a pool of blood and his subordinates, all Muslims, witnessed the gory murder gleefully. In reality, the schedule of killings used to be well within the knowledge of the Muslims working in government offices or living in various localities establishing a close nexus between the killers and bigoted Muslims.

Prof. K.L. Ganjoo, a wellknown agricultural scientist, had a number of Muslim friends and students whom he had taught and initiated. Pandits fleeing from their localities had failed to make an impress on him as he was assured of total protection by his Muslim friends and taught. He had been to Kathmandu on an assignment for

a short period and returned to his native town only in March, 1990. Prof. Ganjoo was kidnapped and subjected to horrific brutalities by his Muslim friends and students, now turned frenzied terrorists. He was ultimately asked to walk into the river Jehlum without looking back and he did look back when he feared to get drowned and the barbarous terrorists fired volleys of bullets to end his life. The Muslim psychopaths relished Prof. Ganjoo's helplessness and pathetic state to the last dregs of it and it was only to establish Prophet's governance in Kashmir.

Mrs. Prana Ganjoo, wife of Prof. K. L, Ganjoo, was kidnapped and gang-raped by the Muslim psychopaths. Her breasts were chopped off and as per police reports she had no body-limb intact and that was why her body was not handed over to her relatives for last rites. The police have declared her dead. But intriguingly her dependants have not been paid compensation so far. But many believe that she is in the captivity of the terrorists, who have converted her to Islam.

Mr. Joginder Malhotra called out from his house was carried off in a gypsy. He was tortured and killed. His body was terribly mutilated and was beyond recognition. The Muslim hounds had dotted his testicles and other body parts with cigarette burns. There were stab injuries also dotting his mutilated body.

Mr. Virendra Bhatt, a junior engineer, hailing from Nagam, fought a duel with a terrorist, who took out a pistol to shoot at him. But other accomplices fired at him from point blank range only to leave him bleeding profusely. The Muslim shopkeepers and neighbours watched the ugly murder, perhaps regimented to believe that Nizam-e-Mustafa was round the corner and murder of a *Kafir* was the only means to achieve and establish it.

Mr. D. N. Mujoo, a scholar, philosopher and theosophist, was a retired headmaster, who throughout his distinguished career as a teacher had taught thousands of Muslim scholars in the schools he had served. He was a life long member of the Women's Welfare Trust, Kashmir, the first institution to establish schools in Kashmir for women of all religious shades under the umbrella of the Theosophical Society. Kashmir Shaivism, Theosophy and J. Krishnamurti were his forte. The terrorists, a pack of hounds, forcibly entered his residence at Rawalpora and slit his throat only to bleed him to death. He was fairly an old man, weak, infirm and emaciated. But Muslim fury knows no humanistic considerations and the cruelty

of slitting his throat open was an essential cog in the establishment of Prophet's governance in Kashmir.

Mr. Ved Lal Ganjoo, Principal, Govt. Higher Secondary School , Sopore fell a victim to armed Muslim bigotry. He was killed in his office chambers and all Muslim teachers having strong ties with Jamaat-i-Islami conspired to get him brutally killed. The principal had a distinguished career as a teacher and was known for his dedication to the cause of education. And the Muslim terrorists cruelly killed him as he was a *Kafir* (infidel) with no place in Nizam-e-Mustafa.

Mr. Sarwanand Koul Premi, a retired headmaster, resident of Anantnag, was confident of withstanding the Islamic hurricane as he had taught every dog in the village and hence could not be so ungrateful as to bite him. He had a brilliant service career and had held aloft the banner of love, affection, tolerance and good will. He was a poet and creative writer. He had the distinction of translating the Bhagvat Gita into Kashmiri language in metrical verse thereby adding richness and variety to the language. But, the Muslim terrorists had already drawn plans for his killing. Some of them called at his house asking him to accompany them for a word. As the genocide of the Hindus had already begun, his family wailed and moaned. He was taken away and his son, Virender Koul, insisting to accompany his father, was also carried off. Both of them were subjected to horrendous tortures. A nail was driven at the spot where he put a tilak -mark. His eyes were gouged out and body-limbs broken and was hanged from a tree for everybody to witness the grisly murder. His hairs were uprooted and body skin burnt and fleeced. His son was meted out the same atrocious treatment.

Premi was a poet holding fast to the *Advaita* concept of 'I am truth'. He was another Mansur butchered by the Muslim bigots for the world-view he harboured and firmly clung to. Like Mansur, he was a paragon of virtue working for the moral upliftment of all. But the Muslim bigotry cannot permit dissent and shades of free thinking.

Premi had a good library consisting of masterly works by eminent authors, scholars and poets. Besides *Vedas*, the *Mahabarata*, the *Ramayan* and the *Bhagwatgita*, he had a copy of the *Quran*, which caused tremendous amazement to the local boors and mercenary Afghans destroying his books and manuscripts after the Muslim fashion.

Mr. D. N. Chawdhary, manager pre-cast cement factory, Wuyan

was kidnapped from his office in presence of three Muslim officers. He was subjected to the worst-ever brutalities and tortures. His hands were cruelly broken and his tongue chopped off. His face was scarred and burnt by moving a red-hot iron-press on it. His eyes were gouged out. His body was thrown at a nearby village, Lethopora on Srinagar-Anantnag highway. It was an open exhibition of brutal savagery and atrocities inflicted on genial tempered Chowdhary would shame all the savages in the world.

Numberless Hindu women were put to barbarous treatment by the Muslim terrorists. The tortures inflicted on them are unheard of even in the darkest period of medieval history. They were molested, raped and massacred only to establish the hatred the Muslim terrorists harboured against the Hindus in general.

Miss Kumari Babli and her mother, Shrimati Roopwati, were kidnapped from Pulwama. Both of them were gang-raped and strangulated and their dead bodies thrown on the road, thus marking a big triumph for Islam and Nizam-e-Mustafa.

Shrimati Girija working in a government school in Bandipora had gone to collect her pay from the school office. After collecting her salary, she called on her Muslim colleague in the same locality. Her movements were watched by the terrorists, who kidnapped her from the Muslim house. The Muslim colleague along with her parents did not even protest for the simple fact that she was a Hindu lady, a *Kafir*, the possession of whose body was *halal*. She was brutally gang-raped, stripped, placed on a bandsaw and chopped into two equal halves. And the brutalised Muslim terrorists committed the heinous crime for establishing a political system as conceived in their Nizame-e-Mustafa.

Shrimati Sarla Bhatt, a low grade nurse working in the Institute of Medical Sciences, Soura, Srinagar was suspected to be aware of the terrorist activities planned by Dr. A. A. Guru, now slain and his cohorts in the Medical Institute. Sarla once by chance while on her duty was said to have overheard the conversation between Dr. Guru and Hamid Sheikh, Deputy Commandant of JKLF, now slain. Taken as an informer, she was eliminated at the behest of Dr. Guru, who had asked the nurse to go on leave but had not obliged him. Ashraf Chalkoo, a hawker from Baramulla, comrade-in-arms of Dr. Guru, along with many Muslim psychopaths raped her. Stripping her naked and slitting open her private parts, Sarla was brutally murdered and

cast off on a road-side, thus installing a corner stone for the structure of Nizam-e-Mustafa.

The genocide of the Kashmirian Hindus as planned by ISI and executed by the wilful Muslim terrorists was the epilogue to the bloody saga actually begun in 14th century. The killings of men and women tellingly establish the cruel and inhuman tortures inflicted by terrorists on the Hindus. Accusing them of being informers, they launched upon their genocide, forcing the entire community to take to its heels without knowing where to take shelter. The brutalities perpetrated on them could not but frighten and chill the community to its bones. The fragile community was denuded of its brilliant men and women for no fault of it. The killings if done in other parts of the world would have raised world-wide protests. But, to the dismay of the Kashmirian Hindus, the state government in absolute shambles presided. over by the bigoted Muslims connived at and abetted the genocide of the Hindus. Every effort was made to hoodwink the Indian public opinion by hiding the anti-Hindu thrust of the terrorist violence. The religious sentiments of the Hindus were deeply hurt by not handing over the dead bodies of hundreds of slain Hindus for last rites to their kith and kin residing in camps littered over the country. The spineless Government of India, too, seems to have a vested interest in concealing the genocide of the Hindus in Kashmir and inhuman and barbarous indignities and atrocities heaped on them.

The civilised world sensitive to the human rights violations was kept in the dark about the massacre of the Kashmirian Hindus and horrendous torture inflicted on them. The civilised world is not aware of the fact that the Hindu women were kidnapped at gun- point, gang-raped, stripped naked and mercilessly butchered and hot iron seals bearing the expression *JKLF* and *Pakistan Zindabad* forged on their mangled bodies. That hundreds of missing women are in the captivity of the Muslim terrorists and their active collaborators was never highlighted by the powers that be. The plight of 3 lakh Hindus thrown out of their age-old homes and hearths living like worms in drains was never put on world focus. The Muslim terrorists wielding highly sophisticated and deadly weapons only to realise fundamentalist objectives were not projected before the world fora and opinion moulding bodies with a view to exposing their evil designs for ethnic cleansing in Kashmir.

The state administrative setup conniving and abetting the genocide of the Hindus has been extremely hostile to the Hindus. But the

ostriches in the echelons of power in the central Capital as a matter of design put a cover over the genocide of the Hindus and played it down as if Thames had not been on flames. The state bureaucracy and the central leaders appear to be on the same wave length, the former aiding the processes of genocide, loot and plunder of the Hindus and the latter providing it a cover only to conceal the battered and tattered fabric of Indian secularism from the public view. No strenuous effort can hide the reality that the Kashmirian Muslims harbouring visceral hatred against the Hindus did not tolerate 2% miniscule minority of the Hindus and hounded them out only to reduce Kashmir to a 'green ghetto'. The democratic and patriotic forces in the country must realise and awaken to the reality that the Muslims if in minority have pretensions for secularism and if in majority violently work for the establishment of an Islamic state. What was the fault of the Kashmirian Hindus ? Have they killed a single Muslim ? Why were they brutally massacred and tortured and their women-folk reviled, molested and raped? The world fora were never informed that the Kashmirian Hindus were hounded out as a prelude to the inaugural of a political system put on the foot-stool of *Shariat* (Islamic law).

Open Loot and Destruction of Property

The Hindus of Kashmir throughout their chequered history have been subjected to frequent bouts of loot and plunder. The savage tribes of Bombas and Khokhas as per the historical records were hired by the Muslim bigots to loot and plunder the Hindus and in case of resistance they were ordained to be burnt alive in their houses. The same instinct of ferocity, aggression and savagery re-emerged and re-surfaced through the length and breadth of Kashmir in the wake of the forcible exodus of the Kashmirian Hindus from the bosom of their native land.

As per the available data, 3 lakh Hindus fled their homes and hearths only to save themselves from terrorist brutalities. They knew not where to take shelter and refuge. The armed Muslim hounds had launched upon a crusade against them designed to extirpate infidelity from Kashmir. The young and the old, the weak and the strong, the deaf and the dumb, the sane and the insane, men and women were put to bullets, untold tortures and agonies, medieval barbarities and savageries. The Hindus all in panic and terror boarded

the first available bus or truck to go across the Bannihal Jawahar Tunnel leaving their house-hold goods and articles in their homes with doors locked and windows shut and barred.

The loot and plunder of the Kashmirian Hindu homes was organised by the Muslim bigots with mosques as focal centres. The goods looted were collected and stuffed in them and later on distributed among the looters as booty leaving a tithe of it to augment the resources of the mosques. The droves of looters and plunderers are said to be not the anti-social and undesirable elements, but men who can be termed as prosperous by all standards. The fury of the looters was discernible when doors, windows and gates were either broken, removed or openings made only to break into the Hindu houses. The Muslims overpowered by predatory and aggressive persuasions and traits indulged in loot and plunder with vengefulness. There is not a single Hindu home in the Valley of Kashmir which has not been looted and plundered with impunity. There are certain areas which have been subjected to a looting spree not only once but ten times. All the Hindu houses in the locality of Rainawari which was allowed to be under a siege of the terrorists have been subjected to loot and plunder umpteen times, thus denuding each house of its goods and articles essential for living a normal and comfortable life.

The Muslim looters and plunderers removed beddings, kitchen ware, gas cylinders, gas stoves, ordinary stoves, mats, rugs, furnishings, curtains, carpets, *gabbas, namdas,* beds, chairs, wooden and steel sofas, sewn suits, suit lengths, cravats, shirts, pulovers, *phirans* especially newly sewn, saris, pashmina shawls, blankets, footwear, *salwar* and *kameez* meant for girls, watches, wall clocks, radio-sets, tv-sets, tape recorders, trunks, briefcases, suit cases, copper ware, brass ware, tea- sets, sewing machines, jewellery and gold ornaments from the homes of the Kashmirian Hindus. It is a loot and open loot reminiscent of tribal societies stunted at the lowest rung of the civilisational ladder.

The Muslim plunderers motivated by their acquired tribal traits removed doors, windows, inner wooden ceilings, electric fittings, roofs, sinks, wash basins and geysers from Hindu houses. Copper vessels meant for warming water covered by cement and sunk in bricks were dug out and looted. Water pipes laid underground and over-ground for supply of drinking water to the houses were dug out and savagely looted. The houses already looted and denuded of all

house-hold goods by one drove leaving nothing for other droves to loot were vengefully and sadistically damaged by scratching of walls, breaking of window and door fixtures, mirrors fixed in walls, and photographs of dead parents and gods and goddesses hung against walls. The looters motivated by tribal culture removed steel and wooden almirahs and other heavy brass pots in hand-driven carts. The prowlers reducing a civilised society to the lowest ebb openly looted and plundered the Hindu houses not at nights but in broad daylight fearing none as all shared the booty. The Hindu houses surrounded by the Muslims were not subjected to one swoop, but were denuded of all possessions at a leisurely pace. In such localities loot was organised by women squads owing allegiance to the *Dukhtaran-i-Milat.*

The Hindu houses yet standing and not put to flames have been illegally occupied and thus grabbed by the Muslims. The Muslims living in such houses keep on shifting from house to house along with the residual booty they lay their hands on. At the very inception of insurgency, the Hindu houses under the nose of their owners were marked red only for distribution as booty among the faithfuls and as of now are under Muslim occupation revealing the Muslim mind harbouring designs to decimate the Hindus.

The Hindu shops throughout the Valley have been looted and plundered or illegally grabbed by the Muslims. The orchards and tracts of cultivable land owned by the Hindus have been grabbed by the Muslim neighbours, selling the produce and thus cornering huge sums, leaving a part of it for the apex body organising the loot and plunder of the Hindu properties. The agriculture commissioner, Mr. Vijay Baqaya in his meet the press programme has reportedly said that orchards belonging to the Hindus are being looked after by their neighbours and relatives. Who are their neighbours ? Who are their relatives ? They are all decaying and eking out existence in the squaldid camps in Jammu and elsewhere. Mr. Baqaya's statement is highly misleading. The fact remains that the Muslim looters have looted and plundered the Hindu properties and grabbed their orchards and cultivable lands. The warning issued by the JKLF terrorists to vacate the Hindu properties is a testimony to the grabbing of their properties by none other than the Muslims.

A community harbouring a mere pretence to canons of civilised behaviour cannot even think of looting, plundering and grabbing the properties of their neighbours. Are there credal canons motivating

the Muslim looters to loot and plunder the properties of the Hindus and that too in their absence? The objectivity of the situation cannot deter an independent observer from coming to the conclusion that the looters mark an eclipse of rationality and sanity for a community allowing such an open loot and plunder of their Hindu neighbours whose joys and sorrows it zestfully shared and partook. And there is a Shaha-bu-din still drawing comfort from a non-fact that the fleeing Hindus handed over the keys of their houses to their Muslim neighbours.

The looted properties from the Hindu homes were openly sold and auctioned. And there were buyers all available for them. The booty was openly sold to the buyers at throw-away prices. What is amazing that no rational Muslim motivated by human sensibilities could raise his voice in protest against the sale of booty establishing it as a throw-back proclivity to the abysmal levels of tribal barbarity. For a tribal booty is sweet and its sale is sweeter.

The 'ethnic cleansing' remains incomplete if the roots of the Kashmirian Hindus are not decimated and destroyed and roots remain embedded in the houses as expressions of human personality. The Muslim terrorists and their accomplices have been relentless in destroying the houses belonging to the Kashmirian Hindus. Such ten thousand houses have been cruelly set ablaze till date. A detailed catalogue of gutted houses bearing locations and FIRs was submitted to the erstwhile Home Minister of India, M.M. Jacob, who could not doubt the authenticity of it as it was replete with and supported by all relevant details and descriptions. The terrorists are vengefully burning the Hindu houses with a view to reducing the Kashmirian Hindus to the status of nomads, destroying their roots and moorings and sealing all opportunities of their return to their native land. Their communal motivations become discernibly clear that they have not burnt a single house belonging to the Muslims who have migrated to various parts of India for lucrative business and sabotage.

A squad leaving the precincts of a mosque on a burning spree is followed by another squad only to remove doors and windows, logs and planks of wood, stones and bricks and other building materials for building their structures with the looted booty or get money by putting them to sale. The grand old house of Dr. Brij Bihari Kachru, a renowned linguist working in the University of Illinios, USA was set ablaze and continued to be burning for days on end. The house was burning and loot was going on. The looters

were elated and extremely gaga that they could lay their hands on most modern gadgets and sophisticated devices. Arson and loot as ingredients of an ethos appear astounding to men of culture and civilised upbringing.

Burning of Books and Temples of Learning

The looters breaking into the Hindu homes were extremely amazed to find piles of books and manuscripts stocked in them. In their utter bigotry and vitriolic wrath, the books were either stolen or torn or burnt. The libraries owned by prominent Hindu lawyers in towns and cities were looted and plundered whole hog. Their loot was allegedly organised by their rivals in the profession. A Muslim with pretensions of being an artist organised Muslim terrorists to loot the brilliant sketches of priceless value from the house of a young Hindu artist, who had died much before the rise of terrorism in Kashmir. Heaps of books were torn and the mutilated pages scattered over the rooms and compounds of the ravaged houses. Medical books looted from Hindu houses were sold off for petty sums to the Muslim retailers, who convert their pages into cones to be stuffed with small quantities of tea, salt, spices *et al*. The works of Karl Marx, Engels, Hindu classics on religion and philosophy, *Rajtaranginis* and other *magnum opuses* were ruthlessly torn or burnt underpinning absolute contempt for books as repositories of knowledge and learning.

The Muslim terrorists, mostly drop-outs, *kalbafs* (weavers), bakers, vegetable-sellers, milk-men, butchers, domestic servants, plumbers, shoe shines *et al* have consistently worked to the end of pushing Kashmir into Dark Ages and their wild onslaught coupled with high-pitched hatred is against books and all levels of educational institutions as temples of learning. The entire net-work of Hindu institutions established by the Hindu visionaries has been mercilessly destroyed along with the precious collections of manuscripts in Sharda Script in such institutions. The entire complex of Vishwa Bharti Institution established and manned by the Hindu minority was first blasted and then torched. The Rupa Devi Shardapeeth established by a Hindu scholar and philanthropist was set ablaze by the Muslim vandals. The institution had a rare collection of Sanskrit manuscripts, which were destroyed, thus inflicting an incalculable damage on the cultural history of Kashmir. The Vassanta Girls High School as the first institution serving the educational needs of women of all hues

was set to fire by the Muslim marauders with all vengefulness. The Gandhi Memorial College as a minority institution was ravaged and set ablaze for the nomenclature it bore. The D. A. V. Higher Secondary School, Rainawari, Srinagar serving as a tower of learning and enlightenment was put to fire by the Muslim Boors. The Muslim philistines have sadistically relished the total decimation of infrastructure for manpower development laid out in post-1947 era.

With a view to focussing on the Muslim abhorrence of knowledge and scholarship, it will be pertinent to allude to the demonstrations in Srinagar against a tome titled as *Book Of Knowledge* authored by a European scholar. The Muslim termed the book as blasphemous and that was sufficient for the book to be banned. The goons in the demonstration catching hold of a French, urinating in a lonely corner, yelled to ban 'Book of Knowledge' and lashed his hands and bare legs with prickly nettles and pat came the reply from the Frenchman, 'Why ban Book of Knowledge only, ban all knowledge.' The prophetic words of the Frenchman have come true as the Muslim terrorists sunk in abysmal depths of ignorance and backwardness operating under the over-all command of Afghan, Libyan, Kuwaiti, Pakistani and Saudi Arabian mercenaries have burnt temples of learning with impunity thus depriving the Kashmirians of having a brush with knowledge and learning. The terrorist fiat of 'no discussion' smacking of Muslim fascism has led to the drowning of all vestiges of rational thinking in the Muslims, who are driven as a flock by the ISI subversives and criminals and foreign boors reducing them to the condition of one dimensional, inert, stunted and brain washed individuals.

Notes and References

1. *Islamic Fundamentalism in Kashmir,* O. N. Trisal, convenor Save Kashmiri Pandit Campaign Committee, New Delhi.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*
5. Parliamentary Debates.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Terrible Plight Of Minorities

The peace-loving Kashmirian Hindus under an armed onslaught and Muslim intolerance were compelled to migrate to Udhampur, Jammu, Chandigarh, Delhi, Varanasi, Calcutta, Bombay and other towns to seek security and shelter. They lost their paradise leaving their homes and hearths behind them only to be barbarically looted, plundered and grabbed. Their kith and kin were brutally massacred and more than most they suffered a shock from the cruel burial given to Kashmir as an abode of hermits (Reshwar) upholding values of love, compassion, mutual trust, hospitality and respect for human dignity. The Vitasta (Jehlum) was bloodied with their blood. The temples erected in the hoary past of Kashmir nestling in the groves of glades and glens suffused with twitter of birds were hatefully blasted marking a heinous onslaught on their cultural moorings. The green earth got seared by the hurling of bombs, explosions and launching of rockets underscoring end of an era— peaceful, blissful and tolerant. The singing streams meandering through the valley lost their song and beauty and verdurous and dense forests wrapped in eerie tranquillity and silence ceased to be a perennial source of philosophical and reflective motivations – all leaving a deep-set psychological impact as they had loved and venerated each bit of Kashmir soil as sacred and godly.

Considerable numbers of the Hindus are languishing in tattered tents, cramped camps and rented hutments. There are others, actually not many in numbers, who are provided a room or so by their close relatives only to live through this period of trial and travail. Many others, slightly well-off, have been staying in rented rooms. Joint families under the weight of cruel times have cracked up. Commodious accommodations not being available have caused breakup in links, parents living apart from their sons, brothers falling apart from their near and dear ones. There are families that have divided, husband at one place earning his living and spouse elsewhere

doing her job and their children, desperate and frustrated, roaming from pillar to post in quest of jobs and admissions.[1]

Pain, agony and anguish are tearing up every individual wherever he be and whatever condition he is in. A mere look at Kashmiri Hindus will establish their extreme frustration, anguish, pains and troubles that have made them a permanent abode. The trauma they are in and untold sufferings and hardships they are faced with have taken a heavy toll of their physico-psychical health. The horrendous events leading to their exit from their native abode have shaken them to roots. That they are in a state of morbidity is the direct outcome and offshot of the nightmarish experiences that have been perpetually haunting them. Very often they come to a breaking point finding a dark tunnel ahead of them with no immediate prospect of it coming to an end. As of now, they have found no caring friends to console, boost and prop them up only to face the dark, bleak and desolate future taxing their nerves. Instead, for one reason or the other, they have earned hostility and animosity especially on part of political parties and self-seeking journalists with their charted courses to pursue only to achieve their political ends divorced of humanistic considerations and empathies.

Gross Discrimination

Thrown out of their native home, the ducks of the lake waters have been unable to withstand the blistering heat. Hundreds have fallen a prey to heat strokes. Camps for them having come up in desert lands have not proved safer places. Hundreds have lost their lives due to snake bites. Tensionridden and unable to withstand the trauma, scores of youngmen suffered heart attacks and died. The older people have been in greater distress as they are economically poor and crippled and forced to spend and live fag-end of their lives in unsavoury and inhospitable conditions and under great strain and stress.[2] The young men at threshold of their careers are convinced of their bleak future as sympathies are lacking and genuine assistance is not forthcoming to alleviate the heavy weight of worries and hardships. All employment avenues have been sealed for them and even opportunities for education valued as a real asset by them have been cruelly snatched. In a state of destruction they have not been in a position to put their learners in very good institutions where they could flower and emerge as the patriotic citizens of Mother

India. The Muslimised state had already slammed its doors on them. The Central Government is equally proving the worst in oppressing and tyrannising them. With a view to conciliating the Muslims, all set norms and regulations are waived and relaxed to recruit them to serve sectarian ends deemed as the only panacea to lift Kashmir from the mire of worst brand of bigotry and chauvinism.[3]

The sun has proved their great tormentor. The tattered tents with gaping holes fail to protect them from the heat and had they been in good shape, they could not have saved them from the searing heat inside the cramped space.[4] Some of the Kashmirian Hindus have been living in one-room tenements bereft of all facilities for a normal life and living. The hygienic conditions are abominable, facilities for fighting the blistering heat are absolutely missing and government agencies responsible for proper maintenance of tented accommodation are callous and apathetic. The rains are no better though they bring a temporary relief after suffering the scorching sun. The fury of wind and rain leads to the collapse of the tents making the inmates really miserable. It is a thing only be lived and felt. Winter is not kind either. It is bitter cold and the poor Hindus, who lost their mobile properties to the Muslim looters, rue the day that they were born in Muslim Kashmir having set new records in the realms of loot, murder and arson.

It is true that the Kashmirian Hindus depending on land or doing small business or engaged in private jobs are paid a dole of 1000/- rupees per month. It as a meagre sum in the times when prices are sky-rocketting is no longer sufficient to maintain a family of five members. Then, the payments have not been regular turning them into models of misery. The entire affair for the Hindus has been poorly managed, bogged down in red-tape and more than most corruption-infested. The callous administration has been repeating processes for them which have already been gone through with the intent of causing them pain and frustration. The Hindu migrants are required to paste a photograph on their ration-cards or registration forms and in case a mischievous clerk removes it or comes off on its own, he is made to starve for months on end with no available channels for prompt redressal. The whole affair is sunk in and riddled with corruption forcing one to feel that the entire country is in the grip of monsters of corruption. The corrupt, unjust and biased administration has proved a scourge for them and for pittances of relief every refugee has to wage a humiliating battle at every step

and end.

The same administration has a different treatment to offer to the Muslims, who have migrated from the Valley for seasonal business and sabotage. They are paid doles regularly and most of the time in advance. They are not required to have ration cards and fill up registration forms. The rations are delivered at their door-steps through government agencies. Some political parties with minimal base in Kashmir are paid doles in lump-sum. The government norm of Rs. 300/- per person subject to a maximum of Rs. 1000/- per month is not applicable to them. The workers of such political parties are comfortably lodged in government quarters, wherefrom they pay lip-service to secularism and dare not condemn the Muslim terrorists and their barbaric crimes against humanity. The erstwhile ministers, MLAs and MPs from Kashmir get the treatment of British lords and peers, are lodged in government bungalows and are paid hefty sums for all the disservice they have rendered in demolishing the entire polity of Kashmir. A cursory perusal of the statements issued by them from time to time are sufficient testimony to their being the apologists of the Muslim terrorism concertedly working to blast the unity and integrity of India and instead of condemning the heinous crimes of the terrorists against the micro-community of Hindus, they have been busy in spinning and spreading a fabric of unfounded canards only to justify the Muslim insurgency with its main thrust against the Kashmirian Hindus.

Aware of the Hindus being bona fide patriots, the terrorists and their cohorts coerced them to march out of their native abode. But, to the utter dismay of the Hindus, all governments at the central capital have been callous, cruel and allergic to them. Their miseries in camps and prisonhole hutments do not form their serious concern. They are paid Rs. 6.50 per individual per day as dole and the Muslim criminals now in jails are paid Rs. 45/- per day per criminal. It is how the barbarous terrorists are fed and looked after. Is it not a travesty of justice? 'Pay a criminal to beef up his morale and stamina and starve a Hindus patriot' has been the star policy of the powers that be.

It is known world over that the terrorists in complicity with the bigoted Muslims, oriented in Hindu-bashing, have been relentless in setting the Hindu houses ablaze, giving the owners a life-time shock. The houses mostly were insured with various insurance companies operating under public sector. The owners submitted their cases to

the respective companies for compensation. As is obvious the Hindus thrown out of their native places could not submit fool-proof cases and must be wanting in details which could be supplied by the government agencies and police department. As the entire administrative set-up including the local police are steeped in the implacable hatred of Hindus, the details are suppressed or wrongly put and conveyed or delayed. Using it as a ploy, the insurance companies and their surveyors alleged to be sunk in the mire of corruption stall their compensation cases thereby causing lots of mental torture to the sufferers already in a trauma.

But, in case of Muslims, rules are bent and regulations are set aside and compensation paid with promptness. Height of it is that the Home Minister of India, Mufti Mohammad Sayyid, paid a visit to Handwara to pay money in cash to the Muslims, whose houses and shops got gutted in a blazing fire, said to be the handiwork of the terrorists. The same Home Minister refused to pay a visit to a nearby village, Gushi, dominantly inhabited by the Kashmirian Hindus whose houses were set ablaze by the Muslim hordes with all vengefulness. The Home Minister deeply rooted in anti-Hindu persuasions did not think of paying a visit to the Hindu village where they had lost properties worth lakhs and the question of paying them compensation did not arise.

As of now 15 percent of the claims submitted by the Kashmirian Hindus for compensation have been settled while in case of the Muslims more than 80 percent claims for compensation have been promptly settled and paid. Why this discrimination is obvious and self-explanatory.

It is a patent fact that the Muslim looters fearing none including Allah, looted and ravaged the mobile properties of the Kashmirian Hindus from their houses, which were broken into in broad day-light. The properties were equally insured with various insurance companies which have virtually shelved their cases already submitted for compensation for untenable and spurious reasons. The Muslimised police officers aiding the processes of ethnic cleansing issue the same uniform certificate that the incumbent had carried his goods at the time he left his home only to buzz off and the same was testified to by the residents in the Mohalla, obviously all Muslims. It is again a travesty of justice that the looters testify that the Hindu owner had taken his goods at the time he was forced to flee his home. If it were a fact, what was the necessity of breaking into the Kashmirian

Hindu houses ? Are there any Hindu houses, which are still locked with their doors and windows shut and barred? Where-from did the booty come which was put to sale in open markets? Gas cylinders looted from Hindu houses were sold just for Rs. 25/- eash only to the Muslim buyer. Shawls and stitched suits were sold and utensils put to auction. And the insurance companies have failed to cognise the anti-Hindu venom in the issuance of such certificates by the police officers with deep-set commitments to terrorism and ruination of the native Hindus. The discriminatory and biased attitude on part of the insurance companies cannot and will not miss the gaze of the Indian public, who are the ultimate arbiters in the prevailing political dispensation.

The Kashmirian Hindus living in camps, one-room hutments and rented spaces have fallen a prey to numerous diseases previously not known to them. Afflictions of the skin have been their common problem. Many have suffered from kidney failures. Still many others have suffered from serious heart ailments necessitating bypass surgeries. Psychological diseases have taken a heavy toll of them. Poor and bereft, yet facing life with guts and fortitudue, the ailing Hindus have been suffering for want of medicines. Deprived of their assets, they are virtually thrown on road-side. Most of them do not afford costly medicines with the result that they undergo agonising pains and even lose their lives prematurely. The government agencies receiving grants for medicines are steeped in corruption are callous and indifferent. Voluntary agencies have equally failed to exhibit any zest for alleviation of the pains of the people in shock and real distress. The Central Government is more worried about beleaguered Afghanistan as if all were well with its own people. Bagfuls of medicines costing lakhs were air-lifted to Afghanistan which is blatantly hostile to India and has been fuelling the fires of insurgency and Muslim bigotry in Kashmir. And the patriotic citizens of India are suffering from agonising ailments and are decaying and vegetating for want of medicines strengthening their feeling that destiny has in store for them a hell-hole where they are dying and are mere breathing corpses.

Not unlike other segments of the Kashmirian Hindus, the government employees having migrated in the wake of terrorism have received the same hamhanded and apathetic treatment.[5] There are regional resentments against their adjustment on available vacancies and the same have been given a pushup by the Islamised bureaucracy.

The annual increments of the employees already in arrears have been withheld only to spiral the troubles and hardships they are faced with. The service records are either destroyed or mutilated or held back only to keep them in constant tension. Those, who are on the brink of retirement, are not in possession of service records serving as a ploy for the officers not to prepare their pension cases for onward transmission to the competent authority. State insurance claims have been put under the carpet only to heighten the anxious state of the Hindu employees. There are cases where final authorities for drawal of moneys were issued to the heads of offices, who either embezzled the sums or avoided drawals on the pretext of having lost the authorities.

The General Provident Fund has not been settled in case of retired employees and the Funds Organisation staffed by the Muslim bigots is the biggest stumbling block in this behalf. Leave encashment benefits have been denied to the state employees who are normally entitled to it. The state administration manned by pro-terrorist elements has been inventing issues upon issues only to cause hurt and trouble to the Hindu employees, denying them arrears, periodical increments, revision of grades and more than most promotions. There are umpteen cases where blatant discrimination, bias and vengeance have been displayed in the most ludicrous form.

The Hindu employees of the University of Kashmir, Srinagar have been openly subjected to harassment and intimidation.[6] The sub-office set up by the University of Kashmir in Jammu to deal with the problems of the migrant students is manned by the Muslims deputed from Kashmir and not by the migrant employees of the University. The post graduate courses in the process of being started for the migrant scholars are to be taught not by the migrant professors living in Jammu, but by the Muslim teachers deputed for the purpose by the University authorities. The whole process is smacking of hatred, prejudice and sectarian considerations. The University campus as such is a den of terrorists and most of the departments are manned by the people with a track record of subversion and terrorism.

As a seminary of Muslim myopia and terrorism,[7] the University of Kashmir has been pursuing the policy of Mukta Khan, the Sheikh-Ul-Islam, who denied and trounced upon the basic right of the Hindus to pursue educative processes and come up as bright sons and daughters of India. The University authorities at the behest of the bigoted Muslim teachers have been concertedly pursuing a policy

frame of disrupting and destroying the educational careers of the Hindu students by delaying examinations and announcement of results. The Muslim teachers have already doomed the Muslim students by motivating them to take up guns for an elusive future and are now out to axe the Hindu scholars pursuing their normal studies. The hateful, brusque and indifferent attitude of the University in announcing results for B.A. and B.Sc. classes after full two years is a real Islamic onslaught on the Hindu community designed to stunt the growth and developmental processes of the budding citizens of free India. The multiple problems of the migrant student community created by the Muslimised University can be sorted out with the aid of healthy minds like Prof. M. R. Puri[8] by affiliating the migrant students to the University of Jammu with a view to off-setting the Muslim onslaught on their right to get educated for a bright future. The general Muslim tendency is to disrupt the educative processes of the Hindus, who in the wake of forced exodus clamoured for setting up of colleges and schools for their learners and scholars.

It is absolutely dismaying that no Prime Minister of this country has expressed a serious concern for the Kashmirian Hindus who are virtually on the brink of extinction. Not to talk of shedding tears, mere lip sympathy was not expressed over their fate of being hounded and coralled out of their ancestral homes only to get reduced to the bottom level of want, penury and deprivation.

They are undeniably the bona fide citizens of this country and had to be protected and shielded from the armed onslaught launched against them by terrorists operating under the Islamic facade. The dismantling of a dilapidated mosque built of brick and mortar was decried as national shame by all the politicians pursuing a particular shade of politics. That three lakh Hindus under an armed onslaught serving the ends of brazenfaced bigotry were thrown out lock, stock and barrel was as per them a national honour. An aspirant for power has been expounding the thesis that an apology be tendered to the Muslims as their religious sentiments have been hurt and impaired. Were not the religious sentiments of the Kashmirian Hindus hurt when their religious places were desecrated, destroyed and burnt whole hog? Assiduous efforts are put in to conceal the grim realities about Kashmir from the people of this country for fear of exposure of the de-humanised face of the ruling cliques and their brusuqe apathy and 'we care not' attitude unto the people in distress and agony.

The crimes committed against the Hindus of Kashmir are the planned handiwork of Muslim majority of Kashmir and their so-called educated elite. Aware of the heinous acts of barbarity perpetrated on them and their present state of destitution and deprivation, the rulers have been assiduously hiding them by maintaining an intriguing silence for fear of getting identified with the Hindus thereby suffering a scar on their secular credentials. Be it said that the Kashmrian Hindus are no life-less brick and mortar. They are a living, pulsating and palpitating mass of population put to brutal massacre, inhuman torture and worst intimidation reminiscent of medieval ages. They belong to this country and have inherited a corpus of values generated during the processes of cultural and civilisational growth and efflorescence and also have a remarkable history of patriotism and nationalism. Their pains and agonies, sorrows and tortures, have been ignored lest the Muslim majority should get alienated.

It is quite painful that the killers are minded more than the sufferers. And every killer identifying himself with Islamic tenets of *Jehad* is to be tolerated otherwise he will get alienated. The Hindus alone are the people who are not prone to alienation and so trounce them, trample them and put them to inhuman torture. In the ultimate analysis the pains, agonies, sorrows and tortures of the Kashmirian Hindus will and are sure to prove a catalyst in the crucible of the Indian political labouratory for the emergence of forces deeply rooted in the soil of India and committed to the preservation and conservation of value frame of tolerance, co-existence and healthy inter-action between various ethnic groups gaining a new orientation in a renewed political agenda.

It will be pertinent to put that the Kashmirian Hindus fleeing their homeland under the pressures mounted on them by armed Muslim bigotry had to sell off their ornaments, jewellery and bulls for paying buses and trucks to carry them out to safer zones only to save their honour and dignity. And the people of India are more than aware that crores were spent in transporting Muslims from Kuwait to India and their homes. The hapless Hindus living in tents with gaping holes, camps that are stenchy and cramped and one-man hutments resembling prison-holes have been dying each day for want of medicines, food and shelter.

M.L. Fotedar as a Congress popinjay paid a visit to Sopore, which is declared as the Capital of liberated zone only to apply balm to the Muslims supposed to have suffered atrocities by the security

forces still holding fort for India in face of tremendous pressures and difficulties. And what was shameful that he did not show any concern and bother about the Kashmirian Hindus dying by inches in tents, camps and hell holes. P.L. Handoo as the mouth-piece of retrograde secessionist politics of National Conference could talk of Resettlement Bill, but has maintained muteness about the plight of Hindus. Saif-ud-din Soz, whose daughter was kidnapped and kept in captivity, goes on talking about conciliating the barbaric terrorists and feeding the machine of canards against the Kashmirian Hindus only to justify *Jehad* and ethnic cleansing. One Shafi Bhat, who stalled the installation of the Gandhi statue in a park in Srinagar, now turned into High Court complex, raised a sign 'stop atrocities of the security forces' by seating himself on the pavements of Parliament House. Ghulam Nabi Azad[9] talks about so-called reservartions about the Kashmirian Hindus, but is gutless in condemning the Muslim majority communalism and the deep wounds inflicted on the Hindus by the Muslim terrorists and their collaborators in the country.

Notes and References

1. R.N. Raina, Migration and After, *Daily Excelsior*, April, 24, 1991.
2. Dr. K.L. Chowdhary and Dr. P.K. Hak have made a survey of ailments afflicting the Hindu refugees in camps.
3. Recruitments made in the government sectors by a Committee headed by Mr. Bajpai vested with special statutory powers in violation of rules and norms.
4. Bharat Bhusan, "Plight of Kashmiri Migrants," *Daily Excelsior,* March 25, 1991.
5. Migrant Employees, Smt. Krishna Bhat and others, *Daily Excelsior,* September 11, 1991.
6. Memorandum submitted to the Vice-Chancellor, University of Kashmir by the University professors and other employees in exile.
7. Mr. Wani, killed by the Muslim terrorists, was Head of the Faculty of Law, University of Kashmir, Srinagar. He was the kingpin of the secessionist forces operating in the University.

8. Prof. M.R. Puri, Ex-Vice-Chancellor, University of Jammu proved of tremendous help for opening of schools and colleges for the Hindu refugee boys and girls in Jammu. He exhibited tremendous zeal for the provision of facilities in such institutions where the refugee scholars pursured their studies despite all odds.
9. Speech as reported in the media.

CHAPTER TWENTY ONE

All Party Meet - 13th November, 1991

Chasing the mirage of political process, the Home Minister, S.B. Chavan, resorted to the freak of summoning all shades of Kashmir leaders for a meet designed to explore the possibilities of initiating political activity in the terror-stricken Valley of Kashmir. The invitation letters addressed to them by the Home Ministry circles focussed among other things on the migration of large sections of the Kashmirian populace from the Valley as a result of escalation in terrorist violence and mayhem.

The political leaders affiliated to National Conference and Congress were the same old faces, who could be held guilty of abdication and non-governance at a critical juncture when menace of terrorism and subversion was swamping Kashmir. Resorting to myopic options and mis-conceived and unfounded perceptions, they had willingly and knowingly contributed to the crumbling and perishment of administration paving way for primitive savagery inherent in terrorism. Malice and communal venom ever on their tongues, they led to the birth and nurture of hopes in the mass psyche that *Azadi* and secession of the state from the Indian democracy was a sustainable and attainable political objective. The same set of leaders had forged alliances with the venomous Jamaat-i-Islami for short-term political gains, thus allowing it to proliferate like a cancerous cell. Mir. Qasim, Mufti Sayyid, G.N. Azad, M.L. Fotedar and Rajesh Pilot as the big-wigs attending the meet reduced it to a jamboree of politicians enjoying or having enjoyed carnival of power and pelf. Most of the leaders sharing different perceptions about the political conditions prevailing in Kashmir found a forum to pontificate on a situation which they as rulers had created and allowed to assume menacing dimensions.

What was regrettable that the Kashmirian Hindus living in exile

and the worst victims of Muslim barbarity were side-lined by not inviting them to participate in the meet.[1] They were both surprised and shocked at the brusque and ham-handed treatment meted out to them by the Home Ministry circles. They felt that they were being tiffed as they have a saga to relate, a statement to make and a view-point to project. As per them, initiation of political process is an exercise in futility until ground realities in Kashmir undergo a sea-change and Muslim terrorism is stamped out to the last vestiges of it. That deliberations of any form debating the future course of developments in Kashmir are vitally related to their survival is what they firmly hold. Motivated by partisan considerations, the Home Minister brushed aside the resentment of the Kashmirian Hindus articulated through their fora on the untenable plea that they had no presence in the valley. Sensing the plea pointless and not cognet, the Kashmirian Hindus were prompt enough to rivet the attention of the Home Minister to the entire flock of Kashmir leaders, who have fled their land only to make Jammu and Delhi as their sanctuaries.

The Home Minister organising a typical Congress brand exercise persevered to listen to the non-perceptive views of the N.C. and Congress-I leaders about the prevalent situation in Kashmir. As doomsmen of Kashmir, the N.C. leaders presented a dubious stand-point of involving the sectarian and terrorist-infested administration of Kashmir in meeting and fighting the formidable challenges posed by Muslim terrorism. They were mostly mute about the heinous crimes committed by the Muslim terrorists and the hounding out of the Hindu minority from Kashmir. That the terrorists are misguided and need be conciliated was the usual fare they dished out at the meet. The Janata Dal leaders with their track record of bunglings in Kashmir failed to offer a solid view-point thus exhibiting total lack of perception about the turmoil enveloping Kashmir. Presenting a rehash of happenings in Kashmir, content-wise not different from that of N.C., the Congress leaders stressed the firm tackling of terrorism in Kashmir and also opening up of channels of dialogue with the Muslim terrorists for a solution within the ambit of Indian Constitution. That the terrorists having risen in revolt and decimated all traces of state authority letting loose a reign of terror need total annihilation is not within the Congress ken. Terrorists have no love lost for the Indian Constitution and are out to fragment the country and are averse to a solution within the parameters of the Constitution. Operating at the behest of a neighbouring country, they

are waging a proxy war, which has to be fought as per the canons of war. When vanquished, the Muslim terrorists along with their local collaborators will beg for a solution, call it a face-saving. 'Tackle terrorism and open up channels of dialogue' can be dismissed as illogical verbiage.

As the victims of Muslim hegemony, the BJP leaders from Jammu region were sufficiently frank in demanding the trifurcation of the state only to loosen the strangle-hold on Jammu and Ladakh by the Muslim bigots ruling the state. The C.P.I. (M) leader from Kashmir with a consistent history of having fought Jamaat-i-Islami agitprop stuck to the position of differentiating the JKLF barbarians from the Hizbul-Mujalideen blood-hounds when both the species owe allegiance to the uniform agenda of decimating Hindu minorities as *Kafirs* with no place for them in Independent Kashmir which is co-terminus with annexation to Pakistan. That killers are secularists, a quaint thesis, sounds astounding .

Aware of the pell-mell created by the N.C.-Congress combine in Kashmir, the Home Minister cautioned all the participants not to resort to harangues only to stall the worsening situation from touching an irretrievable bottom. He also dilated on the insidious and disruptive role-model of Pakistan in matters of interfering, aiding and abetting terrorism in Kashmir, training the terrorists in lethal weapons, lacing them with arms and ammunition, financial support and strategic assistance. What his government was doing to weed out terrorism from the Valley did not form a vital item for his dilation and explication.

The 'All Party Meet' was a snap decision only to camouflage the inaction of a government, which is in office, but not in power. It practically proved a damp squib as it failed to throw up a tangible strategy as a means to counter the insurgency challenging the fundamentals sustaining the Indian democracy. The resolution unanimously accepted by the leaders lent all credence and support to the so-called policies pursued by the Central Government to meet the armed revolt. A brief reference to the Hindu refugees herded out of Kashmir living an appalling life in tents and shanties failed to envisage any positive measures designed to alleviate their untold sufferings and unbearable miseries. That the properties of the Hindus are vengefully being destroyed or grabbed by the Muslim majority was not cognised as a major concern by the wreckers of Kashmir attending the meet.

Pinning his hopes in the Kashmir brand of leaders present at the meet proved to the hilt that the Home Minister was only groping in the dark and was intensly frantic to catch at a straw designed to retrieve a situation that had come up only as an end-product of abdication, non-assertion and more than most non-governance. If he expected the destroyers of Kashmir to prove the saviours of Kashmir, it is safe to put that he was chasing a chimmera or a pipe-dream.

That the Kashmirian Hindus rendered refugees in their own country should be brushed aside by the powers that be was what exhausted their patience and evoked their ire. With a view to registering their protest, they demonstrated at the Parliament House Annexe and vigorously demanded their participation in all meets and parleys debating future of Kashmir. The dehumanised face of the government got openly revealed when it came heavy on the demonstrators by charging, beating and manhandling them only to break their resistance to the apathetic and unfair treatment being meted out to them. The scars inflicted on them are the badges of honour that will stand in good stead in the battle for transforming the destinies of millions for a better future ensuring an even-handed treatment to the sons of the soil suffering worst pains and agonies, not of their making.

If broadened in its range and scope, the 'All Party Meet' could be a meaningful and relevant exercise in matters of furrowing a track to meet the Muslim insurgency in Kashmir. Clinging to partisan interests will not prove fruitful in solving Kashmir allowed to get intertwined in a maze of controversies. The political pundits keenly watching Kashmir developments are fully aware of the failure of the exercise at a time when Central government has yet to establish its writ in the belts of territory outside Raj Bhawan. And the main failure of the 'All Party Meet' exercise was in not sending out a loud and clear message to the Muslim terrorists that they will be met and Kashmir will never move out of the Indian orbit. It never proved a conduit for a stiff message to all hues of disruptionists, both internal and external. Instead, the story of the Indian Government in strife torn Valley is abominable and detestable. It has committed the security forces to meet the perilous challenges of armed insurgency, but does not allow them to act by tying up their hands behind their backs.

Have the ground realities in strifetorn valley undergone a metamorphic change necessitating the initiation of political process?[2] Have terrorists been brought to their knees by launching upon a

vigorous crusade against them to clean the hate-defiled soil of Kashmir? The fact of the matter is that terrorism ravaging the Valley is no longer contained in its fury and frequency. The writ of the terrorists runs unabated. They have not ceased to call the shots. The ominous nexus between the Muslim terrorists and the administration is yet to be broken.

The state administrative set-up as the support plank of terrorism in Kashmir continues to be in stinking health. The bogey of human rights violations as the agitprop of internal and external forces inimical to the sovereignty and solidarity of India continues to damage and impair the morale and fighting potential of the security forces. Donning the eunuch's clothing, the Central Government unable to withstand the pressures from a super power playing the politics of human rights pursues a policy of drift to the total erosion of national security and prestige. Unless firm measures including waging a war on Pakistan are resorted to, Kashmir will continue burning in the fires of terrorism, subversion, disorder and mayhem.

Punching the soft belly of the Indian Government, terrorists run amok under the frenzy of *Jehad* have thrown no signals for a negotiated settlement. Yet the policy framing mandarins, senile and spineless, lacking in conviction and political will, continuously harp on the tune of a settlement within the parameters of the Indian Constitution. And the Government at the Centre has made history by resorting to quaint, grotesque and mind-boggling methods and strategies to fight terrorism in Kashmir.

It is said that fruit is being purchased from the apple-sheikhs feeding insurgency with all their resources at their door-steps and money paid in cash. Handicrafts are bought from the barons in the sector at their thresholds and ninety percent payments made on spot. The insurgent Muslims are being blessed with job slots and jobs are being created to absorb them in hordes. The boatmen are reportedly paid doles in cash. House-boat barons as parts of Muslim terrorism are reported to be in receipt of hefty doles with a view to sustainning them as a resistant force. How could hoteliers be ignored ? They are also paid relief as they are held as the worst victims of the insurgency which they have been assiduously feeding. The bus-owners were reportedly paid Rs. 500/- each to clear the decks of their buses of snow as every snow-fall is declared a national calamity. The government servants are paid hefty salaries for keeping away from their duties. 'No work, no pay' is not applicable to them.

Whenever there is an apparent abatement in terrorism, they go on a lightning strike only to ignite quenching fires. The Chief Secretary expected to gear up the Muslimised administration has dubious credentials. He is one of the signatories to an appeal made to the UNO for intervention in Kashmir. There is an ominous nexus between the Muslimised administration and the terrorists. Government coffers are mercilessly looted and there is no accountability worth the name. Most of the looted money in their kitties, the Muslim terrorists have been busy in building huge mobile and immobile properties. And to the naive Muslims, they are still *Mujahids* waging holy war for the extirpation of *Kufur* (infidelity) from Kashmir.

National Integration Council – A Toothless Giant

Having come into being as a highly prestigious body three decades ago, the National Integration Council was designed to serve as a forum to deliberate upon vital national issues with the sole objective of charting out strategies to resolve them from broad national perspectives. The Council as such has made history by deliberating upon very sensitive issues fraught with perils for the national security. The usual *modus operandi* of the Council has been to issue high sounding statements earning prime media focus. But what has dismayed the Indian public is that the deliberations of the NIC have never been congnised by the men in corridors of power while shaping policy frames and initiatives to meet the formidable challenges.

The Narsimha Rao Government feeling jittery in face of the stridency exhibited by the Bharatiya Janata Party apropos Kashmir converied the National Integration Council with a view to deliberating upon the insurgencies in the Punjab and Kashmir perhaps for a possible way-out to resolve the crises. Guided by its likes and dislikes with respect to various political parties, the ruling party decided to keep the communists away from the meet. It was only after lodging a protest with the government that the CPI was formally invited to the meet. Despite such bunglings at initial stages, many heavyweights affiliated to the broad spectrum of national politics attended the meet. That many business tycoons were invited to the meet was a pointer to the role-model they were assigned in matters of determining the strategies and policy initiatives vis-a-vis crucial problems facing the country. There were many others, invited to the meet, owing allegiance to micro-outfits with limited political operational base. Some

individuals also were considered relevent to the meet, but the Kashmirian Hindus, battered and bloodied, herded out of their native land, were side-lined, thus de-recognized as the bona fide citizens of India.

The 150-member strong NIC was expected to deliberate upon the Kashmir turmoil in its broad facets and evolve a national strategy to counter the proxy war waged by Pakistan drawing support from local Muslim rabids. But, the meet was dishonestly conceived and hence ended in smoke without evolving a strategy or a well-formulated plan to meet the challenges of the Muslim insurgency. Clinging to their party perceptions about the insurgencies, the politicians highlighted lop-sided versions about the origins of terrorism ravaging the two states in full fury and dished out stale cliches as possible solutions to end the crises.

As per the pre-drawn agenda of the NIC meeting, the Kashmir imbroglio failed to attract an exclusive attention of the political big-wigs and business tycoons as it was clubbed with the Punjab insurgency, thus diluting the prime importance of Kashmir insurgency replete with wide ranging ramifications for the country at large. The P.M. crafted its further dilution when he chose to allude to the Cauvery water dispute and exodus of refugees from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. The handful of refugees from the two southern states formed his concern, but, dismaying as it is, the trauma of the Kashmirian Hindus as a result of ethnic cleansing resorted to by the Muslim fundamentalists never attracted his serious attention. In fact, the first resolution adopted by the NIC as a high profile body was pertaining to Tamil Nadu and Karnataka witnessing disturbances as a spill-over of water dispute between the two states. Focussing on the dispute was only to swerve away from the main agenda before the NIC meet. It can be averred that the Prime Minister motivated by a design to fling Kashmir and Punjab to the backwaters dragged the rumpus in the South into the deliberations of the NIC, thus reducing the prime importance of the strife-ravaged states clamouring for a strategy as a means to resolve the deep-set crises.

Absolutely, wanting in dynamism in matters of grapling with serious problems with intense seriousness, the NIC forged a resolution on Kashmir and the Punjab presenting a melange of views put forth by various political parties and many highbrow political personalities only to give it a semblance of consensus. Far from hitting the nail on the head, the resolution was replete with commonplace

generalisations and cliches with the least attempt to forge a concerted and vigorous strategy based on absolute unanimity so as to meet the serious challenges to the democratic polity of India.

Without learning from past-mistakes, the Prime Minister stuck to the same old political stand in regard to the highly controversial Article 370 of the Indian Constitution ensuring special status to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Not ready to cognise the pernicious role of the Article 370 in breeding divisive and fundamentalist forces in the state, the political leaders affiliated to the Left and Centrist parties with the sole exception of Bharatiya Janata Party were for retention of the Article 370 on the plea that its abrogation would mark a harking back on the promise made to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The fact of the matter is that the Article 370 is a promise made not to the Ladakhis, the Jammuites and other minority groups of the state, but only to the Muslims of Kashmir. The Jammuites are for its immediate scrapping. So are the Ladakhis, the worst victims of Muslim exploitation. Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi representing the BJP was forthright in demanding the abrogation of the Article as it has historically proved a formidable barrier to the development of a cohesive nation transcending the regional persuasions for separatism and insularity. The Article as such has bred separatist forces out to snap the ties of Kashmir with India and also hounding out of the indigenous Hindu minorities. It is a stumbling block in forging a so-called consensus, the reference to the said Article was finally dropped thereby maintaining the Article as sacrosanct.

The Resolution also exhorted all political parties to make their solid contributions to the normalisation processes in Kashmir which is ravaged by armed Muslim fundamentalism. Active involvement of all segments of the Kashmirian populace was what the resolution emphasised in crystal-clear words. But, the Kashmirian Hindus seeking participation in the deliberations were kept at bay, thus evoking their wrath and anger.

On 31st December, 1991, a solid group of the Kashmirian Hindus in utter anguish got collected at Jantar Mantar and marched in the direction of the Parliament House Annexe where the NIC was in session in the Main Committee Room. It was not a smooth sailing. They had to encounter several cordons and police hostilities. Protesting that they be allowed to present a charter of demands to the NIC, the police posse, absolutely hostile and brutal, foiled the

peaceful march. The protesters raised slogans and also blocked traffic so as to draw the attention of the people to the blighted lot of the Kashmirian Hindus. That the NIC without their participation was not a representative body to discuss and decide the fate of the refugees was what they endeavoured to highlight. The brute force let loose by the tyrannous government foiled even the attempt to present a memorandum to the NIC meet debating the turmoil in Kashmir. The protesters were forcibly dumped in police vans and whisked away. They were also subjected to a brutal lathi-charge, thus silencing them and preventing them from ventilating and highlighting their viewpoint and saga.

Notes and References

1. Sanjay Kumar, Center's Kashmir Policy : "Side-lining KPS", *Daily Excelsior*, January 13, 14, 1992
2. Pran Nath Azad, "Have Ground Realities Changed in Kashmir", *Daily Excelsior*, October, 1992

Epilogue

As monopolists of brutal zealotry, the Kashmirian Muslims by and large played treachery with their Kashmiri Pandit neighbours for realising the distant but golden dream of *Azadi* and 'annexation to Pakistan', which has now turned into dust landing them in extreme frustration. To their total dismay, Kashmir is not out of the Indian orbit and political reality about it is not a jot different from what it was on that cursed night when *Jehad* was launched with its prime thrust against the Hindus of all hues. Pakistan as per the Muslims has betrayed the cause of *Azadi* and as promised has failed to launch an aggression on the Indian soil. The Kashmirian Muslims by and large have awakened to the reality that aggression on an inch of Kashmir soil will be vigorously met and escalation of hostilities will ultimately lead to the wiping out of Pakistan from the world map. Designed to destroy Kashmir and its aeons old ethos, Pakistan has trained and armed the scum of the Muslim society for waging a war on India and the Kashmiri Pandits. The Muslim drop-outs and illiterates with guns on their shoulders have resorted to brutal killings and grave human rights abuses. The demon of terrorism nursed and fed by a dominant section of the Muslims has been taking their toll. In the initial stages, it was allowed to assume menacing proportions as it targeted the Hindu *Kafirs*, maimed and killed them, tortured them and finally herded them out.

Terrorism ravaging the Paradise was launched to rip open the political and historical reality of Kashmir as an integral part of India. Violence, loot, murder and rape were resorted to only to scare away the Indian presence from Kashmir to pave way for secession. Despite interference in Kashmir from America, *Azadi* or 'Kashmir's annexation to Pakistan' is a pipe-dream for the Muslims. It is widely known that Kashmir was not grabbed by India and its accession to India was voluntary subject to no such conditions as would guarantee secession of the state for a wild future. The Indian Independence Act of 1947 had not envisaged any role model for the people of the state.

The Maharaja as empowered by the Act exercised his options, which were later on ratified by the Constituent Assembly of the J & K State under due process of law. Clinton and his buddies resorting to the imperious policy stance of prodding, hectoring and needling India might be warming the cockles of Muslim hearts, investing them with bouts of satisfaction, prompting them to persevere and impelling them to hope against hope for winning a battle which was lost by political retrogrades in 1947 and won by the radicals. That the loud cries about Kashmir being a disputed territory are absolutely lacking in inherent potential to rotate the wheels of history backwards. The broader shades of freedom struggle in Kashmir highlighting radicalism, liberalism and religious tolerance were for a tryst with modernism and democratic temper as against parochial backwardness, theocracy, bigotry and totalising perspectives.

The Kashmirian Muslims must be sweating in absolute shame that they are led and guided by the retrogrades, who have whipped up extreme religious frenzy and posed rejected frames of thought for social and political renewal coercing the Muslim society to accept the position of bondslaves working out the dictates of the scum stinking in mind and morals. The driving force of bigotry and intolerance are the *Mullahs*, who are the stample theme of fun and cartoons. What has been puzzling that they as such have gained complete sway over the Muslim mayopics, thereby coercing multitudes to follow suit. The atmosphere is both stenchy and stinking obliging even the non-clerics to don themselves in the same fashion, thus sharing empathies with the general mass of robbots monitored to a response. The Jamaat-i-Islami agitprop has succeeded in driving the humanity out of the Muslims reducing them as collaborators of killers and criminals. The Kashmirian Pandits shudder in shock as to how the Muslims suddenly suffered an eclipse and turned wild either to kill their Hindu teachers and neighbours or turned a blind eye to the infliction of worstever atrocities on them. The man in them driven away left them only as a pygmy savage.

As models of fundamentalism and intolerance, the Kashmirian Muslims acted very sober by keeping their nefarious designs close to their chest. They allowed their sons and daughters to cross over to camps for arms training designed to transform the Paradise into an inferno and warily camouflaged any signal about the impending insurgency if premature as per their computations by cunningly characterising it as the handiwork of Indian intelligence agencies.

After the *Jehad* was declared and launched from mosques, they proved deft in raising scares, accusing the Hindus of a sell-out to India and snapping links with them. Finding Jagmohan gutful in meeting their insurgency, his star as their saviour sank taking them no time in labelling him as anti- Muslim with designs to decimate them whole hog. They inflicted psychological violence on the Hindus, bludgeoned and bloodied them and surprisingly, a canard was formulated and floated to malign the brilliant Governor as the author of the exodus. The stunning feature of the Muslim psyche is that once given a refrain they go on fiddling it day in and day out. *Mujahids* have done them proud as they have taken up arms for loot, murder and rape. As they have started looting and raping them, the Muslims in low tones tell their Hindu acquaintances with whom they are reviving contacts that as always they have proved wise in marching out to save their honour and dignity. Such wiseacres have oiled their hands with the blood of Hindus and loot of their hefty properties.

With their hearts throbbing to the tune of *Azadi* and 'Annexation to Pakistan', the Kashmirian Muslims must be realising the wonder that is India, which declares them as migrants when they are on missions of business, change and sabotage. They roam about the length and breadth of India with no fears of physical liquidation. They are the same people that cleansed Kashmir of any trace of Hindus and their culture and manufactured a tissue of lies in justification. Yet the somnolent ethos of the country harbours them, doing business, purchasing properties worth crores and providing support-base to the elements out to subvert the security and integrity of India. Insurgency has paid them hefty enabling them to enjoy both the worlds, warm and cosy life of their homes in the Valley, turned warmer and cosier with the looted properties of the Hindu homes and happy life in the sunny plains free from slush, rains and snows. And it is a travesty that the herded out Hindus, despite Indian hegemony, cannot have a glimpse of their homes and religious places, all reduced to a heap of ruins.

The unjustified cause of the Kashmirian Muslims for a wild political future undermining the broad interests of other ethnic groups has been projected by the Indian intellectuals, who have fabricated outlandish theories in justification of the secessionist movement. Tarkundes, Sachars, Tapan Boses, Kuldip Nayyars *et al* have relentlessly and fearlessly spoken for the Muslims and launched a crusade against the socalled state terrorism ignoring the genocide of

the Hindus and wholesale destruction of their properties. The democratic temper of the country guaranteeing unrestrained freedom to dissenters to ventilate and project their view-point must be belittling and demeaning the so-called Muslim intellectuals, who relished the genocide of the Hindus, affording them pathological pleasure. The catch-all slogan 'Islam is in danger' doped them all and when back to consciousness they contributed to the genocide of the Hindus, doctors draining the Hindu victims of terrorism of their blood for reviving the Muslim killers, engineers leading bands of looters and killers for marauding the Hindus and lawyers in the name of human rights violations leading the hordes for psychological violence on the Hindus and their hounding out. The so-called Muslim intellectuals have shattered all umbrellas of peace, amity and harmony and burnt all bridges joining the two communities. Be it said that the Muslims in launching a crusade against the Hindus are politically, ethically, socially and religiously wrong. The *Azadi* when it was manipulated to dawn was spotted black and sooty (*daag daag*) and nightsmitten and night-bitten (*shabguzeeda).* It will never fructify as it is put on the pedestal of rape, killings, human misery and debasing goals. The patron saint of Kashmir where the hordes brimming with killer instincts marched for blessings crused it, with acid rain and snow, thus scalding all violating the ethos of peace, harmony and tolerance as fostered by him[1].

To the wanton satisfaction of their traditional enemies, the Kashmirian Hindus have been wallowing in a cesspool of misery, pounded, bloodied and hounded out, stateless in their own country, designated as migrants, but not as refugees as such a designation is fraught with grave consequences for the Indian nationalism and secular philosophy. The brutal reality about the Pandits is that they have been hostages of Indian secularism. They have been targeted, victimised and bruised for the fact that they stood for nationalism, pure and pristine in form and content, not harbouring any paler version of it ensuring a pride of place for core communal elements masquerading as nationalists. Bloodied and herded out, the Pandits are hapless, destitutes and deprived, eking out existence, aliens in their own country, bereft of services and assets, facing untold hardships, battling at each step to ward off pressure and weight of indigent conditions, nobody inheriting them as they are no vote-bank, instead self-seekers, well-cushioned and confined to their ivory towers, Weaving a web of canards only to justify the armed onslaught

on them and thus obliging them to lose faith in the saviours of the country usually motivated by partisan ends. History has been repeating itself for them but the latest repetition of it has been horrendous and disastrous in range and impact.

Very few born in Kashmir can conceive and delineate the picture of a better home-land. Pining for being back in the bosom of Kashmir, despite massive destruction, the lakhs of Pandits pushed out under a fundamentalist intrigue to reduce it to a Muslim ghetto are and seem to be flapping their wings for a march back as for most of them like their ancestors Kashmir has been an 'alluring candle'[2], gusts of bigotry and frenzy snuffing it out and favourably placid breezes allowing it to burn on when restored sanity re-kindles it.

The Kashmiri Pandits credited with preserving the 'phoenix-like virtue'[3] of rising from its own ash are making yet another bid to rehabilitate themselves in the cherished land of their birth. It is hoped that they do so, thus, once again, providing to 'history another chance to repeat itself'[4]. History has proved cataclysmic and devastating for them, tossing them from one storm to another, thus, in the process, endowing them with unlimited resilence and toughness to suffer and wallow in pain, yet getting energised to forge and cement new alignments and adjustments to perceptible limits. Historical evidences do establish that the Pandits have rejected rootlessness and despite storms of bigotry and intolerance ravaging them root and branch, they have preferred to be in the environment of the land-locked Valley dotted over at each step with their cultural and civilisational expressions. The toughness and resilience of the Pandits to be in their land of genesis has provided a lot of grist to the mill of secularists. Thrown out by the Muslim bigots and forced to live in inhospitable clime and terrain, they have the potential to carve out a niche for themselves and mark a phoenixlike rise. But, they are not prepared to cease their deep-rooted linkages with the valley, which carries a deep imprint of their flowering in history. Realising the instinctive love of the Pandits for their homeland, the fundamentalist bigotry coralled them out, but what should be understood is that each sod of soil, each mountain peak, each spring, each village and hamlet and each brook will establish the position of the Kashmiri Pandits in Kashmir. Scratch the upper crust of Kashmir soil anywhere, what comes to light is their culture and civilisation, which are not dead in time but living and pulsating only to shape and mould the present and future of Kashmir.[5] All such

attempts as aim at their ruination and annhilation are destined to end in fiasco.

Notes and References

1. The Muslim terrorists organised a march to the shrine of Nund Rishi— Sheikh Noorjud-din— a great soofi Saint. ostensibly to seek blessings from the saint for the terrorist violence on their cards. The said march was joined by lakhs of people, thus giving a jolt to the citadel of India. The occassion was used to distribute weapons for killing and raping innocent men and women, thus defiling the shrine as a seat of peace, love, tolerance and amity.
2. Letter from a friend in exile to another friend in wilderness, both desire to be annonymous.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*

Khama



With an enviable academic record, which includes his three post-graduate degrees in Hindi, Sanskrit, English and B.Ed. from Kashmir University, **Prof. Mohan Lal Koul** served in the various educational institutions of Jammu & Kashmir State. Earlier, in his student days he was active in student union and left-wing political activity. After his retirement, he taught Kashmir Shaivism at Benaras Hindu University as visiting professor under a U.G.C. scheme.

Apart from contributing articles of serious nature to various journals and papers, on subjects varying from "Kashmir and the art of writing history" and "Jaun Paul Sartre : A brief study", to "The concept of Rasa and modern sensibility," Prof. Koul has also authored a book in Hindi *Kavya Saurabh* dealing with the aesthetic aspects of figures of speech. Presently, passing his life as a Kashmiri migrant in Delhi, he is acting as an adviser to a well-known educational society connected with D.A.V. institutions.

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